

THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE.

Contents for January, 1924.

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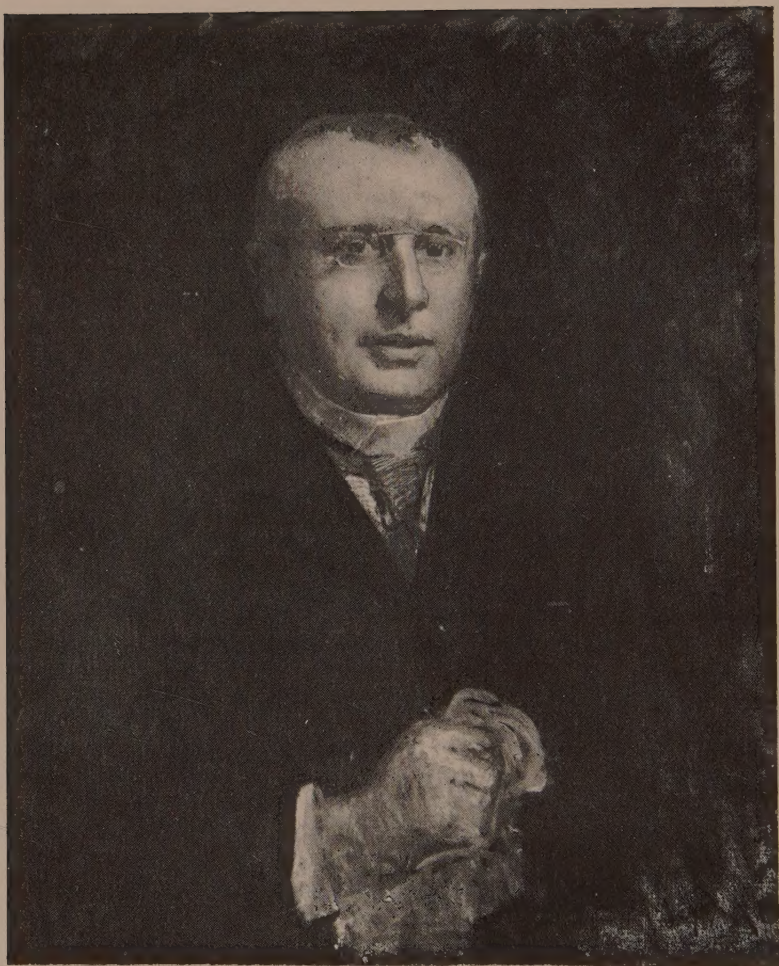
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EDWARD MARTYN.

From an Unfinished Painting
By
MISS PURSER, R.H.A.

THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE.

Edited by SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.

Vol. I.

JANUARY, 1924.

No. 6.

Edward Martyn.

By JOHN MacDONAGH.

IRELAND can ill afford at any time, and particularly just now, when the voice of intellect is so faint among us, the loss of a man of such fine character and noble ideals as Edward Martyn.

It was my privilege for some years to spend hours each day with him, discussing plans, principally for The Irish Theatre, which he founded in 1914 with Thomas MacDonagh and Joseph Plunkett, and in which I acted as Manager and Producer. These hours will remain long with me in happy memory. One would be dull, indeed, who did not catch some spark from that mind, stored with culture and experience, and it would be a nature bereft of sympathy that did not expand in that kindly and genial presence.

Living such a detached life his visitors were very rare; he showed a childlike pleasure in having someone to talk to. "I thought you weren't coming," he would say. "Sit down and let us talk," and so the hours passed pleasantly. Pipe after pipe, he would smoke in his long "churchwarden," and midnight often found me still there, held by the magnetism of his words.

During our season of plays he never would come on the first night, fearing, I think, lest his presence might un-nerve the actors, but he used to send his valet to report how the night went off.

Next morning I generally found him very excited to hear the full account, his first question being "Did they know their words?"

At rehearsals he sat long hours in our cold and draughty hall, interfering little, but glad when any problem of interpretation came up, so that he felt he was being useful.

On such occasions he was a pathetic figure, sitting hunched up, near the radiator, but we all knew the keen enjoyment he experienced as he saw the play taking shape, and his interest was always reflected in greater efforts by the actors.

The tragedies of late years saddened him beyond expression, one after another he saw his friends and associates pass away, and the hopes and ideals of his life pushed back into unfulfilment.

After Easter Week, 1916, he wrote me to Knutsford Prison: "I am glad of the prospect of seeing you soon again. Alas, for your poor brother, and the others! It was an awful shock for me, such great talents and high ideals, only the jobbers and placehunters left. Everything is in ruins in Ireland. I am trying to carry on the Theatre, but what can I do without your brother?"

"Father Condon showed me his last letter to his family, it made me awfully sad. Those executions were abominable. I passed a horrible time during the rebellion, thinking of you all, and listening to that never-ending shooting. I think it is even sadder now when one reflects on all our losses. I am much the same since I saw you. I fear mine is a bad case."

His charm and grace of manner were not of this age, that courtly dignity belonged to the statelier periods, in which he lived spiritually. His dramatic dialogue showed this lack of contact with the world we live in, and once, referring to some criticism of "The Heather Field," I had the hardihood to suggest this explanation, with which he agreed without regret.

He had a pleasant and joyous sense of humour, little suspected, I fancy, by those who only knew the Edward Martyn, founder of the Palestrina Choir, or the portly figure, who could sit stiffly through three solid hours of intellectual drama.

The main ambition of his life, exemplified by his many activities, national, literary, artistic, and musical, was to rescue Ireland from the blighting effects of English culture and ideas, too often encouraged and perpetuated by our own inept acquiescence. To this end he devoted his life and money, and to-day there are signs, however shadowy and indistinct, that he did not labour in vain.

Often, during the few brief years of the "Irish Theatre" I looked on Mr. Martyn as a pilot, guiding us surely and skilfully forward. Some, often, were disheartened and dejected by the persistent indifference and misunderstanding of the public, but his unfailing encouragement, and clear vision, soon set our course again, and bended our backs to the work.

Many times he repeated to me: "We mustn't mind what they say, if we stick together we will achieve something."

In 1918 we were forced to suspend operations, difficulties, arising from the political situation, made the carrying on of the Theatre practically impossible, and added to this, was the increasing feebleness of the "Captain of the Ship."

About the last time I saw him out of doors was when he came to see, the second night of my play, "The Irish Jew," in December, 1921. He took great interest in its success, for he considered me one of his pupils, which, in fact, I was, for I had read and re-read the script to him, benefit-

ting much from his extraordinary grip of dramatic construction, and unerring knack of putting his finger on the weak spots.

On the day of his death I intended writing to him at Tulira, with reference to a contribution for this Magazine, in hopes that his health would allow him to dictate a letter. On my way to the office I saw the newspaper poster announcing the death of a notable Irishman. I got the paper and read the sad news.

It is not now the time to attempt any estimate of Edward Martyn's achievements, but he has left a lasting memory in the minds of his friends, and he has given to his country an example of purest patriotism which may well stand beside the best.

Edward Martyn's principal works are :—

Morgante the Lesser (1890), The Heather Field (1899), Maeve (1899), The Enchanted Sea (1902), The Tale of a Town (1902), Grangecolman (1912), The Dream Physician (1917), The Privilege of Place (1915).

Notes of the Month.

It seems fitting that mention of Whistler's name should have raised a dust two decades after his death. He lived in a whirl of controversy—no occasion was too slight to pass unnoticed. Some casual, often ignorant criticism of his art in an evening paper would bring forth witty, and spiteful letters from his pen, but, in spite of this petty side to his character, his masterpieces were always taken seriously by the real lovers of art. Degas spoke of him as a man of genius who behaved like one without even talent. And yet the gentle art of making enemies has passed out of the realm of controversy into that of literature. We need not be surprised, therefore, that Mr. Kaines Smith, this year's Hermione lecturer should attack Whistler as a "consummate humbug," when all that is great of him has remained to us for ever, while so much of the art of his period has disappeared.

When Charles Conder was asked what modern picture he would most like to possess, he said promptly: "Whistler's Valparaiso." Could Whistler have painted that immortal night scene if he had not spent nights on Chelsea embankment peering over the river and murmuring the ritual which enabled him to memorise the colours and values to be painted the next day? Whistler in his superb arrogance always knew he was right, and his Portrait of his Mother shows the knowledge which goes to make a great portrait full of quiet dignity. There she is, an old woman seated in profile and resting her feet on a footstool, and not a detail could be removed, not a tone altered. And Miss Alexander holding her black hat with the long sweeping feather. These portraits are photographed in one's memory and to see them again after long years only makes the impression deeper. Can such emotion be accomplished by even consummate humbugging? It would be as easy to believe that Titian humbugged the world into believing that the quilted grey sleeve in his portrait of Ariosto was a thing of beauty.

Some objection seems to have been raised in England to the Swedish choice of Mr. W. B. Yeats as winner of the Nobel Prize. One or two journals founded their criticism of the award on the fact that Mr. Yeats is not an English man of letters. But there was no obligation on the judges to select an English man of letters. Mr. Squire published for the occasion an exceptionally appreciative article, showing a rare, but, I think, a sound preference for Mr. Yeats' later poetry. The *Irish Times* writer had read *Innisfree*. Another English commentator allowed that there were only four writers of English "in the running" with Mr. Yeats. We may guess their names: Shaw, Hardy, Conrad, Wells. Of these, Mr. Wells must be much the best known upon the Continent, where he is very widely read.

We hear with regret of the disappearance of *The Wessex Review*. This was a quarterly, issued and edited at Bournemouth in England, which had taken on itself the cultivation of local values in Dorsetshire, advocating in very original fashion the philosophy of regionalism and decentralisation. Only three numbers were published, and we should not be surprised if these became

an object of interest to collectors of literary curiosities. The reason given for the demise of the Review is the absence of its collaborators "abroad"! Unlike most English literary periodicals, *The Wessex Review* lacked the professional touch, and one might hazard the guess that Irishmen had something to say to it. It was as unconventional in its manner as one of those ventures which our own Standish O'Grady used to undertake in the old days. But those who bought it, thinking to read a magazine of picturesque local colour, or to find some fanciful programme of Home Rule for Wessex, must have been sadly deceived. *The Wessex Review* was stiff reading to say the least.

"In the limiting of this Review to Wessex," said the first number, "the idea may be called primarily economic, as wealth is created by the appreciation of the homely; on this value in taste is based the economics of consumption, which has been so neglected lately in favour of production, that the world is oppressed by poverty as never before." There followed two articles with the appealing title *On Making Money*, and an argument (in which Professor Soddy, the chemist, took part, to discover that "money is a ray from the zero of disintegration") on banking and currency and the notion of credit as "the appreciation of fresh values," from which it would appear that both the so-called idler and the fasting saint are among the real money-makers and "economic men." In Ireland, where we live by exchange, we are content with the "known good"; but in another article (*A Note on History*) it is prophesied that Ireland is about to reject this "known good," and thereby give to the next civilisation, which will be in New York, its "idea," as the Jews of old gave their "idea" to Egypt. From *A Note on Dante* we quote this passage: "If evidence is needed of the two ideas of self, they are manifested everywhere in nature as the two sexes, by means of which the species is realised in the specimen; but to have introduced sex into this discussion would have confused the issue, which is between the two ideas as successive stages of time, sex only beginning with their distribution in space. This idea will be developed in a note on Darwin." Alas! *The Wessex Review* has joined the ranks of the dear departed, and we have not had that note on Darwin.

The English critics just now seem to suffer from a decided prejudice against books of a prophetic or even a philosophical tendency. This appears clearly in the reception accorded to recent works by Mr. T. S. Eliot and Mr. D. H. Lawrence. Mr. Eliot has published a poem entitled *The Waste Land*, and Mr. Lawrence a novel called *Kangaroo*. These books are very odd and difficult reading, and Mr. Eliot is deliberately obscure and pedantic; but both writers have something to say that they think is of importance. Immediately the critics, almost with one accord, exclaim: What a pity that these men whom, as we know, can write, should bore us with their mad ideas, prophecies, and philosophies. This appears to be the doctrine of art for art's sake—a serpent that bites its own tail, as Nietzsche said; the doctrine corresponds in literature to the "economic" idea that people can live by taking each other's washing. Decidedly a Blake, or even a Shelley, would not encounter a favourable atmosphere in England just now. In Ireland, after a bout of mysticism, we are inclined, if I understand some of Mr. Yeats' recent remarks aright, to return to the utilitarian or practical conception of literature advocated in the eighteenth century by Burke: this, too, is reactionary.

Mr. J. Middleton Murry, a critic with leanings towards the Left, took up the cudgels in the *Adelphi* on Mr. Lawrence's behalf. For Mr. Murry, almost alone among present-day English critics, has a partiality for "viewy" writers with a message, literary Salvationists, such as Mr. Lawrence. The philosophical passages in his novel *Kangaroo* hardly sustain Mr. Lawrence's pretensions to seership; but one has sympathy with Mr. Murry's objection to the confusing observations commonly made anent that book. We are told, for instance, that Mr. Lawrence shows himself here to be a man of genius, of great imaginative power, and, at the same time, that he is a purveyor of a rubbishy philosophy, on a par with Joanna Southcott and Cagliostro. Is there any instance of the like in history? Genius is a big word; either it is too big a word to apply to Mr. Lawrence's poetry and stories, or his "philosophy" is not the nonsense that it looks! Mr. Chesterton is another critic who draws a quite impossible distinction between a writer's words and their meaning. He recently described a contemporary, a novelist of even more note than Mr. Lawrence, as one of the great men of English letters, the Aeschylus of our days. A little further on in the same article this same Aeschylus is said to be the victim of a debased and barbarous superstition.

The old-fashioned patron of literature is still found in France; one such was Count Robert de Montesquiou, who died two years ago. Some will remember seeing at a Whistler exhibition his dusky silhouette and drooping figure. His Memoirs, *Les Pas Effacés*, have now been published in Paris. The Count was related to all the possible (*i.e.*, pre-Empire) Dukes—and with them he went, affably, by the name of Quiou, Quiou—he had the most affected pride of race; but for friends he liked such people as d'Annunzio, Anatole France, and Marcel Proust, his aesthetic equals; as he said, he was the only European aristocrat who had entirely surmounted Philistinism. He was the original of des Esseintes in Huysmans' *A Rebours*, and of the unpleasing de Charlus in Proust's *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* (de Charlus, it will be remembered, was the nobleman in Proust's book who never used his title except when he travelled *incognito*). de Montesquiou painted, wrote verses, and, in the fashion of an earlier era, kept up a huge correspondence. His letters to Marcel Proust (Proust lived in Paris, and de Montesquiou at Versailles) numbered over two hundred.

A Polynesian Night's Entertainment.

LIGHT it now. One Ku-kui nut* and then another will burn along the string as I tell my stories. It is well that you have brought so many nuts, my younger brother.

At Ke-kaa lived Ma-ui and Mo-e Mo-e ; they were friends, but no two men could be more different : the great desire of one was to go travelling, doing mighty deeds, and the great desire of the other was to sleep. While Ma-ui would be travelling, Mo-e Mo-e would be sleeping. He was called O-pel-e at first, but afterwards he was called Mo-e Mo-e, because no one before or since ever slept so much as he : he could keep asleep from the first day of the month to the last day of the month ; if a thunderstorm happened it would wake him up ; if no thunderstorm happened he might go on sleeping for a whole year.

Once he went off travelling. He had not gone far when he lay down by the roadway and slept. While he was sleeping a freshet of water flowed down and covered him with pebbles and brambles and grasses—covered all of him except his nostrils. Then a ku-kui nut rested in his nostril and began to grow. It grew tall ; it began to tickle his nostril, and then Mo-e Mo-e wakened up. “ Here am I,” he said, “ at my favourite pastime, sleeping, and yet I am wakened up by this cursed ku-kui tree.” He started off then to find his friend Ma-ui.

He did not find Ma-ui. He found, however, a woman whom he liked, and he married her and settled down in her part of the country. His wife had much land, and Mo-e Mo-e went out and worked on it. He needed no more sleep for a while, and he worked night and day until all the lands that his wife owned were cleared and planted. Then one day he told her that he would have to return to his own country. “ And if something should happen to prevent my coming back to you,” said he to his wife, “ and if a child should be born to us, name the child, if it should be a girl, for yourself, but if it should be a boy name him Ka-le-lea.” His wife said she would remember what he told her, and Mo-e Mo-e started off on his journey.

On his way he felt sleepy and he lay down by the roadside. He fell into one of his long slumbers. He was sleeping for ten days, or perhaps for two less than ten days, when two men came along, and, seeing him lying there, took him up and carried him on their backs to where their canoe was moored.

Now, these were two men who had been sent out to find a man who might be sacrificed to one of the gods in the temple. They were highly pleased when they came upon one who could give them such little trouble. They put Mo-e Mo-e in their canoe and brought him to the island of

* *Ku-kui*—The Candle Nut, used for lighting Hawaiian houses in the old days.

Kauai. He didn't waken all the time they were at sea. They carried him to the temple, and still he did not waken. Then they made ready to sacrifice him to the god that was there.

While they were waiting for the hour of the sacrifice a thunderstorm came. That made Mo-e Mo-e waken up. He saw where he was : and the pig that was to be sacrificed, and the bananas, the fish, and the awa were beside him. He saw the two men who had taken him squatting down with a spear between them, and he heard what they were saying. They, like us here, were telling a story. "And so," said one, "Kamalo went on his way." Mo-e Mo-e listened and he heard part of the story.

Kamalo, a squealing pig upon his shoulder (said the second man) went hurrying on his way.

No man going into danger ever went so quickly as Kamalo did. And he was going into great danger, for he was on his way to the cavern where the Shark-God, Kau-hu-hu, had his abode. And you know, my comrade, that if a man ever ventured into that cavern before, he had never come out of it alive.

He came to it. Before the cavern was the great sea. Inside of it were Moo and Waka, the Shark-God's watchmen.

When they saw a man hurrying up to the cavern with a squealing pig upon his shoulders, Waka and Moo shouted to him to go back. But Kamalo came right up to them. "Our lord is away," they said, "and it is lucky for you, O man, that he is away. Fly for your life, for he will soon return." Kamalo would not go. He put down on the ground the pig he had brought.

Waka and Moo ran here and there beseeching Kamalo to go away. The man would not go. "I have brought this pig as an offering to the Shark-God," he said, "and I will speak to him even if afterwards he destroy me." "It is now too late for you to get away," said Waka, "for, lo, our lord returns." "Hide yourself in the cavern ; tie up your pig, and perhaps when our lord sleeps you will be able to get away," said Moo. They tied the pig and they covered it up with seaweed ; Kamalo went into the cavern and hid behind one of the rocks.

A great rolling wave came to the cavern ; another came, and then another. With the eighth roller the Shark-God came out of the ocean. Kamalo looked out and saw him. And when he looked upon him he trembled and drew himself further into the depths of the cavern.

The Shark-God transformed himself. He was now in the shape of a man, but he was taller and broader than any two men that Kamalo had ever seen. He came within the cavern, and Kamalo saw that he had still one mark of the shark upon him : on his back and between his great shoulders there were, as if made with tattoo, the lines of a shark's opened mouth.

When he came within, Kau-hu-hu began to sniff. "I smell a man, a man," he said. Kamalo quaked with terror ; the Shark-God, with his great height and breadth, seemed fearful to the men.

And still he moved about the cavern, and Moo and Waka, his watchmen, ran this way and that way, striving to get him to give up his search. There was a squealing outside. Kau-hu-hu stopped and ordered this watchmen to bring to him the thing that squealed. They went outside and came back with Kamalo's pig.

"A pig," sniffed the Shark-God, "then there must be a man about. Where is he?"

Then, in their terror, the two watchmen pointed to where Kamalo had hidden himself. The Shark-God put down his two big hands and drew the man up.

"Man, I will eat you," said the Shark-God.

"I have brought this pig as an offering to you," said Kamalo. "Do not eat me."

Then Kau-hu-hu wondered at a man being so bold as to come within his cavern with an offering for him. "Man, why have you come?" he said.

Then said Kamalo: "Kau-hu-hu, you are a shark, but you are also a god. I have come to ask you to avenge me upon a cruel king and a wicked people. No one else is able to exact the vengeance that my soul craves, and so I have come where no man ever ventured before—into your cavern and into your presence."

"I am a shark, but I am also a god," said Kau-hu-hu, "and if that king and that people deserve the vengeance that you crave, it shall be wrought upon them. But if they do not deserve that vengeance, I will kill you and devour you for having come into my cavern."

"I will tell you why I crave vengeance on that king and on that people." And then Kamalo told the Shark-God all that he had suffered.

The king of the place that Kamalo had come from—Kupa was his name—had a drum that had been brought to him from far Kāhiki. He would let no one strike on that drum but himself. He made a place for the drum, a sacred enclosure, and no one might go into it. Now Kupa was a cruel king; so cruel was he that his people became cruel, for the gentle and kind fled away, and the people who remained under Kupa's rule became harder and harder, and at last it came about that they would not get angry at the worst thing that their king did.

Kamalo had two boys; they were still children, and they used to play with the king's children. Now, one day when their father had gone into the forest to choose a tree that might be made into a new canoe for the king, these two boys went towards the king's house. They came before the enclosure where the drum was kept. The other children were not there to play with, and the boys played with each other for a while.

Now and again they would stand before where the drum was placed and look at it. They did not know that Kupa was watching to see what they would do.

At last the boys went into the enclosure ; it was sacred, and their going into it broke the law that the king had made. They sat down there, Kamalo's two sons, and then they struck upon the drum. They could have struck upon it so that the whole land would hear, or they could have struck so softly that the noise would be only like the fall of rain upon the leaves. And this was how they struck—a little noise that was only like the falling of rain upon leaves was all that the sons of Kamalo made when they beat upon the king's drum.

But the king heard even this little sound ; he came very softly up to the enclosure. The boys looked round and saw him ; the king was standing there with his eyes hard and his lips revengeful. He called for his executioner. And the executioner came and he slew the boys in the enclosure where the drum was kept.

All this happened while their father was in the forest. He came back and he went to the enclosure where the King's canoes were sheltered. He stood beside the great canoe that he had helped to build, the King's canoe that was painted red. He put his hands upon it, for he greatly rejoiced in this handiwork of his. Kamalo put his hands along the outrigger of the canoe ; he looked down, and then it seemed to him that he saw a hand stretched from under the canoe.

He stooped down and he looked under. He saw two bodies with their hands outstretched. He drew them out, and he saw the bodies of his sons. And Kamalo, when he looked upon them, knew that his sons had been slain by the king's executioner.

He went away from the king's house. He met many men and he spoke to them, telling them of the terrible thing that the king had done to him. But each one he spoke to said : " Yes, such is Kupa, our king. He has not dealt harder with you than he has dealt with others." And when they said this the men looked at Kamalo, and he saw that their looks were hard even as the king's.

He went within his house and he sat there thinking. To whom could he go for vengeance on the king ? Who would be powerful to avenge him upon Kupa ? There was the terrible Shark-God : to Kau-hu-hu he would go, even into the cavern where no man had ever ventured before.

He took a pig as an offering to Kau-hu-hu, and he went hurrying on his way ; no man going into danger ever went so swiftly before. . . .

Mo-e Mo-e heard no more of the story then. He stood up. The two who were guarding him were so startled that they did not lay hands on him. He took up the spear that was between them and he went off.

Back to his wife's he went, and he left the long spear with its edge of shark's teeth in the house. " I will have to make another journey," he said, " and if again anything should happen to me that will prevent my coming back, and if a son is born to us, and if he should want to go in search of me, give him the spear so that I may know him and give him the name that I told you."

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He went to work in the fields again, and he worked day and night, and his wife's brother, Po-po-lo-au, and her servant, Po-o, were astonished at the work he did. And then, on the very night that his son was born, Mo-e Mo-e fell asleep. He slept for ten days and for another ten days. His wife, her brother, and her servant tried to waken him; all they could do could not waken Mo-e Mo-e. Then his wife shook him; she made noises; she poured water on his eyes, but still he slept. Then she said: "There is no doubt about it: Mo-e Mo-e is dead."

She called her brother and her servant and she said to them: "The Chief is dead. Wrap him up and carry him to the beach and cast him into the sea; that is the best that one can do for a dead man." Her brother and her servant did as she ordered, and a wrap was put around Mo-e Mo-e, and then he was carried down to the beach and cast into the sea. Then Po-po-lo-au went home and Po-o went home.

His wife's name was Ka-le-koo-lau-ae, and concerning her and her brother, Po-po-lo-au, and her servant, Po-o, a strange story is told. After they had left what they thought was the dead body of Mo-e Mo-e in the sea, Po-po-lo-au and Po-o went up the mountains to get timbers for the roofing of a house. They were far from home, and the night came on dark and rainy. Po-o wanted to go back to the house, but Po-po-lo-au would not return through the dark and the rain. Nothing would do him but that they should spend the night in a cave.

So they went into a cave that no one had ever gone into before. And at Po-po-lo-au's desire they lighted a great fire to keep themselves from the cold. And then, although there were things in the cave that they should have been fearful about, they both went to sleep.

In the middle of the night Po-po-lo-au was startled by something that he thought was happening. He wakened up, and he saw that the fire was burning Po-o. He called him, but the servant would not waken up. He went to him and tried to rouse him, but still he would not awaken. The fire which had been burning the man's feet went further up his body. Po-po-lo-au lifted him and tried every way to bring him to wakefulness, but there was no stir from Po-o. Then, when the fire had burned up to his neck, Po-po-lo-au let him lie there, and ran out of the cave. He ran towards a hill. When he reached the top of it he heard a voice calling to him: "Wait until I come to you and we will go home together." He looked back and he saw a head with fire streaming out of it coming up the hill after him.

He ran to the valley, and the head rolled down the hill after him. He looked back and he saw tongues of fire shooting out of the rolling head, and he became more frightened than before. He ran on and on. Through many valleys he raced, and always the head raced behind him. He reached the plain, and then he could hardly go on because of the terror he was in.

It happened that at that time a wizard was walking with his friends along that plain. "Do you see the person who is coming towards us?"

he said. "If he is not caught until he comes up to us he will be saved. But if he is caught before that I do not know what will happen to him." As he said that Po-po-lo-au came running up to them and then, the head did not come any nearer.

Po-po-lo-au told the wizard all that had befallen him. Then he went to his sister, the wife of Mo-e Mo-e. She asked about her servant, and he told her of how he had been burned and how his head had chased him.

Then the wizard came into the house. "I have come to you," he said, "because I fear you may be burned. The head that chased this man will come here. It will want to come within and stay in the house, but do not ask it to come in or you will come into its power. It will ask you to go outside to it, but do not go out. It will ask you to send your child out to it, but do not send him out."

And then he said: "When you hear a whistle outside it will mean that the head is near. Then move into a corner of the house and keep very still. When the outside is all lighted up you will know that it has come, and when the inside is lighted up you will know that it has entered the house.

The woman stayed within the house, and about the middle of the night she heard a whistle outside; then all outside was lighted up, and the voice of Po-o called to her asking her to come without. "I will not go outside, for it is raining," she said. "There is no rain," said the voice of Po-o.

Then the voice spoke again and said to her: "Send out to me your little child." And the voice went on to say: "I have what your child liked well—ripe bananas. Send him out to me and I will give them to him."

"I will not send him out to you," the woman said, "for the child is now asleep."

Then the head came within the house, but the woman had hidden herself, and was not to be found. The wizard stole in; he drew the woman out of the house and he closed the door. The head called out: "Do not close the door on me; I wish to come outside." But those outside blocked up the door and would not let it out, for they knew that what was within the house was the demon of the cave that had gone into the man's head. Then fire burst out in the house; there were twelve loud sounds; the head was shattered, and after that there was nothing ever seen of it. And that is the strange story about Po-o.

(To be continued.)

TWO SONNETS BY MICHAEL SCOT,

I.

On Losing her Brooch from his Cloak

I will upbraid my dreams with vain reproach,
O foolish dreams, to let her gift escape !
By night and day ye clustered round this brooch ;
Ye know the shell-strange beauty of its shape,
The stone of sea-burnt green, the beat of wings
Lifting the silver in whose heart there gleams
A foam-fresh dawn, bright with heroic things,
Dusk-rainbowed by antiquity.

Ah ! dreams,

Was this lost gage—alas !—dear kin of those
Mystical gifts of love most sweet and intense,
A look, a word, a smile, a tear, a rose,
Soul-fires that flame but an instant on the sense,
Too fine, too fair to stay—too brightly fraught
With poets' passion and with lovers' thought ?

II.

A Poet.

Rising from this dull age's cavalcade
His song seems like a star on death's array,
A tremulous silver bow-string blown away
From Artemis to lie in mortal shade,
An ivory carving, a fine-tempered blade,
Or a fair fabric from an older day ;
A music or a colour gone astray
From antique harmonies that may not fade.

Something it holds of essence magical
Such as enchants chalices gem-inwrought,
Strange rings and books of vellum clasped with gold
Destined for some white-fingered cardinal,
And all those things whose high perfection brought
The gods to walk the earth in time of old.

John Butler Yeats, R.H.A.

By THOMAS BODKIN.

JOHN BUTLER YEATS, R.H.A., was born in 1839 at Tullylish, County Down, of which parish his father, the Reverend W. B. Yeats, was rector. His stock was clerical, for his paternal grandfather, John Yeats, was also a rector, of Drumcliffe, in Sligo. He was educated, first, at a preparatory school in Liverpool kept by a Miss Davenport, and then in the Isle of Man, at the Athol Academy, Douglas. At the age of twenty-three, he graduated, with honours and a prize in Political Economy, at Trinity College, Dublin. As he possessed a small ancestral property in Kildare which made him independent, he married, at twenty-four, Miss Susan Pollexfen, daughter of a Sligo shipowner, one of an old family of Cornish descent. They lived for the first couple of years of their married life in Sandymount Avenue, Dublin. His active, impetuous intellect could not endure absolute unemployment, and soon after his marriage he began to study for the Irish Bar, to which he was called in 1866. During his career as a law student he took a most prominent part in student activities, was elected Auditor of the Law Students' Debating Society in 1865, and read for his Inaugural Address a paper entitled "The True Purpose of a Debating Society." Efforts to practise his first profession proved unsuccessful and were short-lived.

Even as a child he showed an instinctive taste and aptitude for graphic art, and was addicted to desultory drawing on old scraps of paper, whitewashed walls, or whatever came readiest to his hands. The pen-and-ink drawing which he made of his wife soon after their marriage, and which is reproduced in the supplement to Senator W. B. Yeats' "Reveries over Childhood and Youth," was done in 1867, before he thought of becoming a professional artist or had taken to the serious study of art. It is pleasantly arranged, competently executed, and in no way amateurish.

In 1868 his artistic tendencies crystallised into action, and he went to England to study, with the determination of becoming a professional painter. His property was rapidly deteriorating in value, and his financial circumstances made it necessary for him to find a mode of livelihood for his young wife and growing family. He had an introduction to "Dicky" Doyle of *Punch*, who, perhaps, suggested his attendance at Heatherly's famous school.

In London his brilliant artistic and conversational gifts enabled him to enter circles both of painters and writers. Samuel Butler, author of "Erehwon" and "The Way of all Flesh," then undistinguished



MISS YEATS.

By

J. B. YEATS, R.H.A.

(From a pencil drawing in the possession of Thomas Bodkin, Esq.)

and almost unknown, and Edwin Ellis, later joint author with Senator Yeats of a fine book on William Blake, were the most interesting of his literary friends.

One of his chief painter friends was T. J. Nettleship, who began his career as a Pre-Raphaelite, painting such good things as "Jacob Struggling with the Angel," lately in the Mond collection, and "God Creating Evil," reputed to have been described by Robert Browning as "the most sublime conception in ancient or modern art." Nettleship afterwards came, by a strange freak of fancy, to devote himself to impressionistic paintings of lions on the trail, some of which were reproduced in chromo-lithography in the boys' paper *Chums* during the last decade of the nineteenth century, and were, of their kind, extraordinarily meritorious.

Frank Huddleston Potter, that greatly talented painter who died of neglect and starvation, was another of Yeats' fellow-workers, and Yeats wrote a touching note on Potter for the Tate Gallery catalogue. "Dormouse," Potter's last and best picture, which is now in the Tate Gallery, hung for years in Yeats' house before a purchaser for it was found. Other painting acquaintances were Sydney Hall, well known for his black-and-white work; George Wilson, the retiring, rarely-gifted Neo-Pre-Raphaelite, and the Hon. John Collier, whose "problem pictures" have made him so popular with the average Academy visitor.

Yeats never studied abroad, and received all his academic art training from Heatherly's, the Slade, and the Royal Academy Schools. We may be sure that he owed more to his fellow-workers than to his titular instructors, and more to his own searching and energetic mind than either. In one of his letters, written when an old man to his son, he vehemently declares: "In obeying rules, the highest even, we should never forget that in so doing we are not alive." Yet he worked hard in his apprenticeship. Senator Yeats in his "Reveries over Childhood and Youth" has told of his painting a picture of a pond, from spring throughout all the seasons of the year, only giving it up when he had painted snow upon the heath-covered banks.

The influence of the Old Masters is not directly traceable in any of his work, but there is much clear evidence in his early pieces of the powerful influence of the "Old Mistress," as Millais used, tenderly, to call the object of his early devotion, the Pre-Raphaelite ideal. In his first important water-colour and pen and pencil drawings, in such things as the Browning illustrations, "Pippa Passes" and "In a Gondola," a bias towards both literature and detail, the two salient characteristics of Pre-Raphaelitism, is apparent.

During the latter "eighties" he did some excellent unsigned drawings which were engraved on wood and appeared in *Good Words* and *The Leisure Hour*. They do not suffer on comparison with the work of many of the famous "Illustrators of the Sixties," for whose productions there is now-a-days such a cult among the *cognoscenti*. The illustrations for the complete edition of Defoe's work, published in 1894

by Dent, were a task to tax any artist's mature powers. They are thirty-two in number, wash drawings reproduced in photogravure, full of insight into the author and his characters. They do, unlike most so-called illustrations, illuminate the text, and give the reader a feeling that they were made with great gusto and sympathetic understanding. Even more harmonious are the drawings called "Mosada" done for "The Celtic Twilight" in 1893, and the six drawings for "The Secret Rose" in 1897.

From the year 1868 Yeats fluctuated between London and Ireland, living variously at Burnham Beeches, Fitzroy Road, North End, and Bedford Park when in London. When he settled down in Dublin it was at Howth, whence he came to paint every day in his studio, at one time situate in York Street, at another in Stephen's Green, and at another in Harrington Street.

His art, as years passed, was more and more devoted to portraiture, in oils and lead pencil. There are pictures of his, such as the exquisitely wistful one of street children, called "The Bird Market," that make many regret the exclusiveness of his inclination. This little masterpiece was exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1886, and there priced ten guineas. It was next exhibited at the London Guildhall Exhibition of the works of Irish painters organised, in 1904, by Sir Hugh Lane, who prefixed an illustration of it to the catalogue. It now hangs in the Dublin Municipal Gallery, a presentation from the late Doctor C. E. Fitzgerald. Because of "The Bird Market" and other pictures of that class, A.E. was almost certainly right in saying that "Mr. Yeats, who, as his 'King Goll' shows, might have been a great romantic painter, has probably chosen wisely, and has painted more memorable pictures than if he had gone back to the fairyland of Celtic mythology."

It is hard to analyse the great power he possessed. He was not strikingly accomplished in the mere technique of painting, and was, even to the most casual observer, much more closely concerned with painting as an art than with painting as a craft. He was rather contemptuous of dexterity. "An indulged facility," said he, "is the clever man's curse in painting." His own work is uneasy. Senator Yeats has told us "he is never satisfied, and can never make himself say that his picture is finished." Indeed, it is often plainly to be seen that his paint has been dragged and troubled till the texture became woolly or harsh. Save in such a rare instance as the portrait of Mrs. Tynan Hinkson, he drew hands badly or not at all. His colour is always pleasant, and sometimes can be rich and satisfying, as in the portrait of the late Timothy Harrington, M.P., in his scarlet Mayoral robes and chains of office.

Professor York Powell said that "the inspiration of Mr. Yeats' art is sympathy," a trite, though truthful, observation. The painter himself helped us to a clearer conception when he declared: "There is no beauty unless we can discover some flaw or weakness. If we hunger after knowledge, as I say we do, we hunger also after pity; or is it because otherwise we feel that the picture is not true, the facts are not all there?"

Yeats was much concerned with the human spirit, and as little as needs be with its casing; his bent was intellectual rather than sensuous; according to him, "desire and not emotion is the substance of art," and this "desire" he defined as "a rarity of feeling." So he "always encouraged the models to talk," striving to learn from them, to live in them, to seize from the millions of possible poses and expressions the one that brought the body, as he saw it, most into relationship with the soul that he divined. His portraits of women are always full of respect and understanding. It is hard to single out one for special reference, but he probably never did finer work than in that of Mrs. Melville Smith. Some of his great men portraits, those of John O'Leary, of Standish O'Grady, of George Russell—particularly the version of Mr. Russell in Mr. John Quin's collection, for he sat for three different portraits—and, above all, the John Millington Synge in the Municipal Gallery, have an air of mingled intimacy and dignity that no other portrait painter of modern times surpasses, unless, indeed, I may cite Gustave Ricard himself.

The portraits in oils are not numerous and are very scattered. I have not the slightest idea of how many are extant; but I fancy I have not heard a hundred spoken of, nor seen more of these than fifty. The pencil drawings would seem to be strewn all over Dublin. Almost any contemporary of his with artistic associations will be found to possess a couple of them at least. He drew everyone who interested him, all the writers and talkers of his time. These drawings are simply blocked in with a soft pencil, and show, as a rule, more regard for modelling than line work. There are exceptions: a delicate full-faced bust of Sir Hugh Lane, as a man of thirty, before he grew a beard, and a sensitive, distinguished profile of Senator Yeats, aged about twenty-four, are noteworthy. Among the best of his drawings are those of his two daughters, of Synge and of Padraic Colum, all in the Misses Yeats' possession. The Contemporary Club, of which he was a constant member, has a large number of drawings of his friends and fellows. Mr. William Magee, lately assistant librarian of the Dublin National Library, better known as John Eglington, "the Anglo-Irish Essayist," owns a good drawing of his own striking head. One in chalk of Isaac Butt, measuring about two feet by one and a half, an unusually large scale, is in the Irish National Portrait Collection.

Yeats never seems to have struggled for adequate recognition, and it never came his way. He exhibited spasmodically at the Royal Academy and the Royal Hibernian Academy—twice only in the Royal Academy, in 1887 and 1889, but fairly regularly in the Royal Hibernian Academy, commencing, I think, in 1880, with a picture which his friend Edward Dowden looked after for him, as he himself then lived in London. In 1887 the Royal Hibernian Academy elected him an Associate, and this was followed up, in 1892, by his promotion to full membership. He was never a popular portrait painter in Dublin in the sense that Walter Osborne was, or Catterson Smith.

The Dublin Magazine

Some of his admirers organised at 6 St. Stephen's Green, in 1901, an exhibition of pictures by him and by Nathaniel Hone. There were seventy-two works shown. Yeats was responsible for forty-three. The catalogue contained a short introduction, signed S. P., and critical notes on Nathaniel Hone and Yeats by Mr. George Moore and Professor York Powell respectively. This exhibition was a success, but did not alter to an appreciable extent the deadly apathy of Dublin to both of these distinguished artists.

Mrs. Yeats died in 1900, after thirty-seven years of married life, much troubled in the earlier part by financial difficulties, but even then made dear by the deep mutual esteem that existed between her husband and herself. For years before her death her mind had gone in a stroke of paralysis, and her sight had become of little use, but she lived freed from worry in placid happiness to the end. She did not care for pictures and she never went to an exhibition to see one of her husband's; nor would she enter, even when they were first married, his studio to see his daily work. But their son has told of the letters she used to write her husband, recording her delight in such things as mountainous clouds, and he has told also of the profound admiration and constant praise her husband had for her. Her death must have been a trying wrench.

He still painted as much as ever, and showed some half-dozen important portraits at each annual Hibernian Academy Exhibition for the next seven years. Among the most interesting of this period were those of the Abbey Theatre personages—particularly Lady Gregory, Miss Horniman, W. G. Fay, and Padraic Colum—and those of the Right Honourable Sir Horace Plunkett, the Right Honourable Mr. Justice Madden, Sir James Dougherty, Timothy Harrington, Standish O'Grady, Mrs. Dowden, Mrs. T. W. Russell, and Mr. George Moore.

The Abbey Theatre was at the height of its fame about this period, under the joint management of Lady Gregory and Senator Yeats; and Yeats, senior, always alert for literary discussion or discovery, took the liveliest interest in its fortunes. When Synge's "Playboy of the Western World" roused bitter controversy in Dublin in 1907, the management of the Abbey called a public meeting for the free expression of the opinions of all and sundry, at which the old man made a speech, vivacious and angry, in defence of Synge's art, a fine performance which few who heard it will easily forget.

For some reason unknown to me he did not give evidence before the Royal Commission appointed in 1906 to inquire into the methods of art teaching in Ireland; but he attacked the majority report in a lively article, published in "The Shanachie" for March, 1907, and hotly contested the theory that art should be cosmopolitanised. "Cosmopolitanism," he wrote, "is another word for dilettantism. An artist without a country is an artist without inspiration, and, for all his dexterities, he is a trifler."



MRS. TYNAN HINKSON. (By J. B. Yeats, R.H.A.)

(Reproduced by the kind permission of the Authorities of the Municipal Gallery, Dublin.)

Shortly after this pronouncement, in 1908, he sailed with his eldest daughter for a visit to the United States which was intended to last for only a couple of weeks. Miss Yeats duly returned at the appointed time. Yeats remained there, talking, painting, writing letters, and making friends till his death in February, 1922, at the patriarchal age of eighty-two. Two volumes of extracts from his American letters, written on all manner of topics to his sons and daughters, selected by Mr. Ezra Pound and Mr. Lennox Robinson respectively, were published under the titles "Passages from the Letters of John Butler Yeats" and "Further Letters of John Butler Yeats," in 1917 and 1920, by the Cuala Press, whence also his "Early Memories" are just about to be issued.* In 1918 appeared his stimulating "Essays, Irish and American."

His fame as a painter grows steadily, if slowly, in Ireland.

His pictures are not readily accessible. No one has ever deliberately collected them. Mrs. Todhunter, of Orchardcroft, Bedford Park, London, owns some of the best of his early Pre-Raphaelite work, as does Mrs. Travers Smith, the daughter of Edward Dowden. The portrait of Mrs. Travers Smith herself as a young girl, an excellent example of a pleasant phase of his work, is like a Watts' child portrait, but done without a trace of the Watts' self-consciousness.

There is a remarkable series of notable modern Irishmen by him, the gift of Sir Hugh Lane, to be seen in the Dublin Municipal Gallery, and another similar series—mainly of literary celebrities and actors—the property of Lady Gregory, hangs in the hall of the Abbey Theatre. A portrait of Sir Andrew Hart is in Trinity College, Dublin. The one of Lord Mayor Harrington, previously referred to, is in the Dublin Mansion House. A painting of John O'Leary and the drawing of Isaac Butt are in the Dublin National Gallery.

It is a pity that his extraordinary conversational talent filched so much of the time which he might have devoted to painting, but there are sufficient fine examples of his work extant to raise his reputation as a portrait painter to the high degree of honour won by such Irishmen as William Cumming and Hugh Douglas Hamilton. He had easily surpassed them both were susceptibility and instinct for character the only requisites of a portrait-painter.

* These have been published since Mr. Bodkin's article was written.—Editor.

Laoithe Cumainn.

II.

A dhuine chollas go sámh,
ní hionann dáil damhsa is duit ;
is lór dhíbh bhar méad do rígh,
ní tharla an grádh ar tí h'uile.

Mór na tiodhlaicthe fuair tú,
do damnaigheadh don tnúth inn ;
ní comhairleach ort an grádh,
ní hionann is mar tá rinn.

Do rinne Dia grása ort,
ní tusa an bocht lán do phén ;
ní chluinim h'osnadh ná h'uch,
níor thrég tusa do chruth fén.

Fá-ríor ! ní hionann 's ar nós,
breth a bhuidhe ní mór dhuit ;
ní heagal ribh gan dul d'éag,
ní hionann is méad ar n-uile.

Peannaid shíordhaidhe mo ghlóir,
mallacht sinsir do-chóidh fúinn ;
fada go gcredfinn ón bhás
go bhfuil oidhidh i ndán dúinn.

Beag dom dhonas nár mhúin mé
gach a gcuala i bpén ón ghrádh ;
do shaoil mise nách beinn leamh,
's do-rinneadh leam fear mar chách.

Gidh mór an truaighe mar tám,
ná caoineadh cách méad mo phian ;
cead leam ar chlaochlóidh dom chruth,—
maith is neasa don ulc riamh.

Do dhealaigh rium éag go bráth ;
dár mbeth slán do cuireadh súil ;
mé gach éan-lá i dtós mo phian,
míle bliadhan gach dia dhúin.

Ní críonna na daoine-se lán do chéill
Re saoiltear nách ríoghacht mar tám i bpén ;
An chnaoi-bheatha a mbím-se is do ghrásaibh Dé ;
Ní haoibhneas ní ar bioth ach bás gan éag.

[Source: 23 I 40, p. 48. A lover's boast that he is, as it were, doomed never to die, for, owing to the torments of love, every day to him is as a thousand years.

MS. readings: l. 2, *dhamhsa*; l. 3, *ar méad*; l. 14, *heagail*; l. 20, *oigidh*; l. 27, *chlaodhchlo dh.*]

“On the High Road.”

From the Yiddish of J. Rudkovski.

Translated by HANNAH BERMAN.

THE road which leads from the village of K. to the village of T. is now deserted and desolate. Not so long ago there stretched itself here a road of nothing but ruts, with ditches on either side which were always covered with earth and overgrown with grass. Now it is entirely covered with loose gravel.

A few weeks before there had arrived engineers and surveyors. They measured and calculated and fixed the road. From all sides stones began to arrive for the old road. Then stones were being broken for days on end. And in a short time there stretched away on both sides of the road long rows of pyramids of gravel, but such evenly-measured gravel that they looked as if they had been measured by instruments.

Before the day had fully dawned a little light appeared in the hut by the road in which the overseer lived. He had already totted up the work of yesterday, refreshed his heart with a few glasses of brandy, and had gone out on to the road, where the labourers were waiting for him. The labourers were peasants of the district who could not support themselves by their little fields. And on the estate they were worse paid than on the road. The overseer counted the labourers, and was about to give them the signal to start work, when, on that instant, there appeared a new figure which seemed to have sprung up out of the ground. It placed itself with the others in the line.

This was a Jew, still a young man, but already emaciated and worn-out. The thin, dry figure looked remarkable, with its flaming eyes and burnt lips, amongst the rested, fresh, healthy, and sturdy peasants.

He stood and waited to be questioned.

The overseer examined him from head to foot.

“Hayyimik?” he asked. “Hayyimik from K.?”

The Jew took off his hat and bowed low.

“How do you come here?” asked the overseer in amazement.

“To the high road!” came the Jew’s quiet answer.

The overseer laughed.

“To the high road? Ha-ha-ha! Yes, a wedding! . . . What is it? Is there no work to be had in the town?”

“My house has been burnt down,” Hayyimik scarcely managed to say.

“Well? You came to the high road! A nice business! What do you think—that I want parasites here? A barrow is not a needle!”

Hayyimik began to explain himself. Not only his house, but the whole village had been burnt down. There was no one to sew for. . . . At home he left a wife and eight little children. . . . And, because he knew the overseer, he had come to ask him for work on the high road.

The overseer shook his head.

"You will not be able. It is not for your strength."

Hayyimik's eyes lit up. He was not altogether turned away! He took courage and straightened out his bent shoulders. He wanted to appear taller and stronger.

"Why should I not be able?" he said proudly, as if he had grown a head taller. "Oh, mister overseer! . . . Surely, I am so strong! And, indeed! a great thing to push a barrow! The whole town knows what strength there is in me. And, secondly, if I am not equal to the others at mid-day, your highness may sack me, and I will go away. May I live to see to-morrow, as surely as I am speaking the truth!"

The overseer was amused.

"Would it not be better," he remarked, jocularly, "that you should rather be a money-lender?" (Hayyimik smiled.) "Is it not better to skin people, or even to swindle in a little shop, to deal in grain—so long as one grows rich? Afterwards, you can make a satin coat for yourself, have as much money as wood." (Hayyimik smiled again.) "At the worst, you might 'shoe' horses—stolen horses. You could earn more even then. . . ."

Jewish thieves!

The idea tickled Hayyimik, and he smiled for the third time, his white teeth showing between his red lips. He felt happy. "His honour" was not angry, but was merely joking with him. May it do him good!

"Very well," said the overseer, "work if you like. The work, I know in advance, will be no good for anything. But do not imagine that you will receive a day's pay for half-a-day's work. Do you want to work by the piece?"

"Yes."

Well, take the barrow. Push off. But do not spill the gravel into the ditch. . . . As many pyramids as you will make, so many will you be paid for."

The overseer gave a shout that the men should hurry off quicker to their work, and went back to his hut, to refresh his heart with another glass of brandy.

And Hayyimik betook himself enthusiastically to his task.

He drew off his coat, took off his hat, and remained standing in his little cap and "four corners."

Then he went to the shed, took out his barrow, fitted the ropes to his shoulders, and began to work.

He filled the barrow with gravel to the brim, pushed it on to the boards across the ditch, and spilled it out, a few paces further on. He raced back with the empty barrow, just as if someone were beating him on the back of the neck.

The peasants opposite him worked slowly, like oxen in a field. After every round they stopped, laid aside their barrows, and sat down on the stones to rest a while. Only Hayyimik did not stop for one second.

And when he was left without strength, and had to sit down, he soon jumped up again, as if he had been scalded. And, wishing to make up for the time he had lost, he overloaded the barrow and pushed it still faster with his trembling hands.

The overseer shouted every now and again :

“ Listen, Hayyimik ! You will tear your heart out. Don’t gobble so fast ! ”

But Hayyimik paid no heed. Surely he was being paid by the piece. He wanted to work. But he was worried by the little stones which were scattered over the board, and stuck into his feet. . . . The little stone does not begin to know that he has left a wife and eight children at home, in all, nine mouths. The stone does not dream that every mouth wants to eat ; when it gets nothing, it makes a noise. . . . It does not occur to the stone that Hayyimik is nervous, so nervous that he cannot bear to hear a child crying.

As long as he could, he was a tailor, sat at the table, and worked so industriously that one needle after another broke in his hands. Now, no more tailor ! No one dreamed any more of having a garment made. Half the town was reduced to ashes and cinders. . . . And Hayyimik had to betake himself to the high road . . . So long as he could manage to exist for that day ! . . . But of all these things the little stone wished to know nothing at all. It stayed where it was, and pricked his feet mercilessly.

Hayyimik made a grimace, and groaned in pain. But he had no time to select clean places for his feet. He trod wherever it was necessary, so long as the barrow was moving forward.

Several hours had gone by. The sun was already very high in the heavens, and was burning fiercely. Hayyimik had to sit down, take off his cap, and cool his perspiring head. He counted up on his fingers the number of pyramids he had formed. And a sigh tore itself from his heart.

The money which he would receive for his work would scarcely suffice for food for his wife and his eldest daughter. The calculation frightened him. He again betook himself to his work, just as if someone had endowed him with new strength.

In such heat only the overseer was comfortable. He rushed into his hut every few minutes. And also Bartek, who worked so slowly that in the same time that it took him to empty his barrow, Hayyimik had made a whole round, to the pyramid and back. Bah ! There was no need for Bartek to hurry like Hayyimik. He had a bit of field, and his requirements were few. . . . And, besides, he had always worked in the fields, under the sun. Whilst Hayyimik was frail and nervous, and he had never yet worked in the open, under the sun. True, his house was narrow, and close, and had not sufficient air. Nevertheless, he had a roof over his head which protected him from the fire of the sky.

And the sun rose higher and still higher, and shot out the most scorching arrows of fire. . . . But Hayyimik did not pause. He had

the strength to hold out. It was not for nothing that he had told the overseer that he would work no worse than the other men. Bah! He had already outstripped them all.

It is twelve o'clock. All the peasants have thrown the barrows off themselves, and have gone off on one side, under the trees, to eat their dinner. Hayyimik snatched a bit out of the dinner hour, and loaded up another few barrows full of gravel. And again he sat down beside the ditch. And again he counted up the money which his work would bring him in. The sun was scorching, but the calculation turned him cold. All the pyramids which he had built up would scarcely provide enough food for his wife and three children. And what about the rest? Hayyimik looked at the sky, and comforted himself with the thought that the sun was now right above his head. It was still far off to evening. And the other children were tiny mites who would be satisfied with anything at all.

He pulled a piece of bread and salt out of his pocket, and sat down to rest. It was surprising to him how weak his hands had become. So long as he was at work he did not feel them so much. But now he imagined that his arms were nearly tearing themselves from his shoulders. But that was nothing! He would lie down for a time, and sleep would restore his strength. He covered his head with his coat, lay down on the grass, and fell asleep. . . .

First he dreamed that he was far from the high road, from the gravel, and from the burning sun. He was back at the town, in his quiet, cool home. . . . And he was lending out money at interest, and "shoeing" horses, doing business in his shop. . . . People respect the golden calf—ask favours of him. . . . And he lay down and stretched himself out on a pile of bank-notes, as on hay, and was listening to the rustle of the paper roubles. He remembered that the overseer had really told him that there was a better means of livelihood than walking on gravel, and dragging the accursed barrow, under the broiling sun. . . . The peasants, too, looked at him with a smile. How does a little round cap and a "four corners" come to be working on the high road? But, soon, the angel of rebelliousness led him back to the high road, and told him to work. . . . And he had a wife and eight tiny little children. He did not dare to work easily and slowly, like other men. The calculations he had made impelled him forward. . . . He dared not leave go his hold of the barrow for a second. . . .

It is true that he had already earned enough to provide food for his wife and three children. But the others, the tiny little ones, visited him in his sleep, and were like a stone at his heart. The sleep exhausted him still more.

He woke up, opened his eyes, and threw a glance at the high road. The peasants had not yet returned to their tasks. In such a heat no one was willing to leave the shadows of the trees in a great hurry. . . . But Hayyimik had no time. He again attached the rope to his shoulders, gave his barrow a push, and began to work for food for his fourth child.

And again there began a battle, waged in sweat and blood. And the frail little Jew of the black flaming eyes and the burnt lips was the conqueror! Again a few hours went by. The sun was already setting. The overseer was pacing up and down the high road, and wondering where Hayyimik got so much strength.

“A hardy beast,” said he.

The “hardy beast” heard his praises, smiled, and went on with his work. But as time went on the work grew harder and harder. His hands and feet were refusing to do any more. Another second, and he imagined that he would drop down, like a horse between the shafts, which could not pay any more heed to the whip.

It was miraculous that Hayyimik had still so much strength left in him which enabled him to go on pushing the barrow over the gravel.

When his flesh was utterly exhausted, he still had nerves. And they helped him in his need.

Now, now, one thought, Hayyimik will let out a cry of pain, so distended are his veins and his temples, so terrible does he look, pushing the barrow, with teeth clenched, and hands trembling! . . . But he did not cry out. His nerves worked.

At last the evening has come. The flaming sun lowers itself to the ground. The overseer is making up the totals of the work done, and is letting the peasants go home. Hayyimik stands at his barrow, wiping his perspiring forehead. And, for the third time, he is making up his calculations.

It is all right. He has earned as much as the other workmen, and a little over.

His wife and all the eight children will have something to eat on the morrow. . . . To-morrow he will come again. Again hold battle with the gravel and the sun. And so forth, and so forth. . . . And every day there will be something to eat. . . .

Then, why does Hayyimik still retain his hold of the barrow, and again fill it with gravel, and again push it across the board?

His whole body is now utterly exhausted. His nerves, too, are worn out. He does not work so quickly and wildly now as before. . . . The work goes heavily, exhaustedly, sleepily.

He pushes the barrow, and looks far, far away, and listens to the echoes on all sides of him. . . . A dark evening has fallen, and Hayyimik is still pushing his barrow. It is not his flesh which is working now, nor his nerves. It is his imagination which is working now. It also wishes to make a pyramid of gravel. . . .

If you were to ask Hayyimik: “For whose sake?” he would, no doubt, answer you:

“For the sake of the ninth child which has not yet come into the world, but which is already a few months on the way.” . . .

James Elroy Flecker.

By MONA PRICE.

THERE are two primary requirements which it is necessary for a poet to possess if his work is to be of lasting value ; the one is vision and the other a sense of design. The poetry of James Elroy Flecker, the most brilliant figure in that very talented group of young poets who were up at Cambridge in the years just preceding the Great War, is rich in both these qualities. He did not write merely careful verses with the "literary" outlook, as did many of those young men whose work obtained a spurious fame owing to the reaction of the masses, at an emotional time, to the tragedy of early death.

"Hassan," now being produced at His Majesty's Theatre, has been acclaimed by certain critics as the greatest tragedy since Shakespeare. One can only wish that the author had been alive to witness the very favourable reception accorded by press and public to this, the favourite child of his imagination.

Like many other people, he began his career as a poet by translation. His vivid and ironic renderings of four poems of Catullus, written at the early age of sixteen, take easy rank beside the translations of older men. Throughout his life he kept up this useful exercise, and scattered through his collected poems there are English versions of Meleager, Baudelaire, Leconte de Lisle, Moreas, Samain, and, most skilful of all, a rendering of Paul Fort's "Philomel." In its evocation of a mystical atmosphere, in its power to make the imagination tremble on the brink of an unknown land whose full realisation would be intolerable ecstasy, the poem is only equalled by that other, more famous "Ode" on the same subject :

"The panicked garden drives her leaves about :
The moon is masked : it flares and flickers out.
O shivering petals on your lawn of fear,
Turn down to Earth and hear what you shall hear.
A beat, a beat, a beat beneath the ground,
And hurrying beats, and one great beat profound.
A heart is coming close : I have heard pass
The noise of a great Heart upon the grass.
The petals reel. Earth opens : from beneath
The ashen roses on their lawn of death.
Raising her peaceful brow, the grand and pale
Demeter listens to the nightingale."

At College he was inevitably a prey to the influence of Wilde and Swinburne, and from these early experiments, doubtless, gained much of the flexibility and grace of metre that distinguish such poems as the "Queen's Song" :—

"Had I the power
To Midas given of old
To touch a flower
And leave the petals gold,

I then might touch thy face,
 Delightful boy,
 And leave a metal grace,
 A graven joy"—

or "Yasmin," the beautiful serenade in "Hassan," written in the Eastern ghazel form :—

"How splendid in the morning glows the lily : with what grace he throws
 His supplication to the rose : do roses nod the head, Yasmin ?
 But when the silver dove descends I find the little flower of friends
 Whose very name that sweetly ends I say when I have said Yasmin . . ."

There are three predominant influences on his poetry in its maturity: Greece, the East, and the French Parnassian movement. By his own confession he had more in common with the Parnassians than with any other recent school of poetry :—

"The French Parnassian has a tendency to use traditional forms and even to employ classical subjects. His desire in writing poetry is to create beauty : his inclination is towards a beauty somewhat statuesque. He is apt to be dramatic and objective rather than intimate."

He detested the modern tendency towards formlessness, and was an extremely careful craftsman ; yet his poems are saved from assuming the cast-iron mould of much Parnassian verse by the vividness of his imagination and the coloured throng of beautiful and original images that riot through them.

He was one of those for whom "le monde visible existe." Like his own Greek sculptor, he "loved the veins of the leaves, the shapes of crawling beasts, the puddle in the road, the feel of wood and stone." He did not desire to see the back of the moon.

"Enough the light mysterious in the tree
 Enough the friendship of my chosen friend."

Yet he could never say quite whole-heartedly with Herrick and the poets of the Greek Anthology, "Cueillez des roses," for he suffered, like most moderns from the malady of introspection, and the swift fading of his roses too often for him overshadowed their beauty. He seems to have had a premonition of his own early death, and his personality made it impossible for him to bolster himself up with consoling metaphysical theories :—

"I know dead men are deaf and cannot hear
 The singing of a thousand nightingales.
 I know dead men are blind and cannot see
 The friend that shuts in horror their big eyes.
 And they are witless—O, I'd rather be
 A living mouse than dead as a man dies."

The scene in "Hassan," where the ghosts of the tortured lovers, Rafi and Pervaneh, speak with the fountain ghost, indicates his attitude even more definitely :—

Ghost of Pervaneh—But what of Paradise, what of Infinity, what of the stars,
 and what of us ?

Fountain Ghost—I know no more than you.

The Dublin Magazine

Ghost of Pervaneh—Is the secret secret still, and this existence darker than the last ?

Fountain Ghost—Didst thou hope for a revelation ? Why should the dead be wiser than the living ? The dead know only this—that it was better to be alive.

Flecker was no pessimist, however. His view of life, as of death, is essentially Greek. With the Hellenic joy in beauty, movement, and colour he had intense sympathy, as with the Platonic ideal of education, on which he wrote an imaginative, yet practical, essay advocating a humanistic training in the arts to the most brilliant students (who would afterwards became the aristocracy of intellect of their country) in an ideal school modelled on that of the great Renaissance humanist Vittorino da Feltre—boys who under the present public school system leave school with a tolerable knowledge of Greek and Latin, but preferring in general Watts to Whistler, and musical comedy to Mozart.

“ I walked in Hellas years ago
With friends in white attire,
And I remember how my soul
Drank wine as pure as fire.”

The “ cold flutes and clear ” inspired him in some of his finest poems. He adored the ballet, the most perfect manifestation of art in modern civilisation and the nearest to the Greek ideal. Here again, he felt the tragedy of impermanence. Though she symbolise eternal youth to the spectator, the aesthetic ecstasy he derives from the dancing of Pavlova can only survive as long as his memory of it, and the dance must, always, therefore, remain the most exquisite and fragile of the arts.

“ Who is she with the moon upon her brow
And who the fire-foot god that follows her ? ”

he cries in those verses on the great Russian, which end so wistfully :—

“ ’Tis an old story that sweet flowers decay,
And dreams the noblest die as soon as flowers,
And dancers, all the world of them, must fail.”

The Greek islands fascinated him as they did Byron. “ Hyali ” and “ Santorin ” suggest the magical blue sea, the blue unclouded sky of Greek legend. I quote a few lines of the latter for their lyrical music. The mermaid who has been the lover of Alexander the Great hails a passing sailor of modern times :

“ Alexander, Alexander,
The King of the World was he.”
“ Weep not for him, dear Lady, . . .
He’s dead as dead can be.”
“ O base and brutal sailor,
To lie this lie to me.
His mother was the foam-foot,
Star-sparkling Aphrodite ;
His father was Adonis,
Who lives away in Lebanon,

In stony Lebanon, where blooms
 His red anemone.
 But where is Alexander,
 The soldier Alexander,
 My golden love of olden days,
 The King of the World and me ? ”

She sank into the moonlight,
 And the sea was only sea.

Those who write about the East are almost invariably engulfed by the Scylla of ubiquitous eroticism, as in the case of Laurence Hope, or the Charybdis of what might be called the Arabian Night décor, as an end in itself. Flecker skilfully avoids both. “Hassan” fulfils Aristotle’s primary requirement of tragedy. It induces pity and terror in the spectator, and, what is more important, in an even greater degree in the reader. Though not actually written in verse, except for the Prologue and Epilogue and the lyrics scattered through it, “Hassan” is a poetic play, of the same family as the verse dramas of W. B. Yeats and Gordon Bottomley. “It is a significant thing that the only tragic plays which have held the stage from the days of Greece have been poetic plays and plays springing from a poetic outlook on life,” and the poetic outlook Flecker undoubtedly possessed. In his four protagonists he detaches the eternal from the temporal. Hassan, Ishak, Rafi, and Pervaneh become more real to us than living people. The plot is briefly as follows :—

Hassan of Bagdad, a confectioner by trade, a sensitive idealist by temperament, rescues and amuses the Caliph Haroun al Raschid on one of the latter’s incognito nocturnal expeditions. For this service he is exalted to a high place in the Palace and makes friends with Ishak, the Caliph’s poet, the only free spirit at a court of cringing slaves. Haroun is tyrannical, treacherous, and an artist in cruelty, and Hassan is his friend only as long as he does not oppose or cross his master. When at last the gentle humanist does implore mercy for Rafi and Pervaneh, two lovers whom Haroun would destroy, since they have plotted against him for their freedom, the Caliph thrusts him away, deprives him of his rank, and, most terrible of all, compels him to watch these two, beautiful, proud, and passionate, under unnameable torture. Half-mad with grief, he lies in the garden waiting for death, when Ishak, his only friend, weary of an enslaved lute, bears him away to go with him on the famous pilgrimage to Samarkand, the golden journey with those who travel :

“Always a little further : it may be
 Beyond that last blue mountain barred with snow,
 Across that angry or that glimmering sea.”

Thus we are concerned with the tragedy of four lives. Hassan, Rafi, Pervaneh, and, in a lesser degree, that of Ishak the poet, who is, it is true, a spectator of the downfall of the other three, for “the poet must learn what man’s agony can teach him,” yet in whose life they have

all become intimately interwoven. Into the wild and capricious beauty of the personality of Haroun's poet it is obvious that Flecker put much of himself. From the moment he appears in the play in the act of abandoning Haroun on his nocturnal spying, to go and watch the dawn alone, every word he utters expresses the winged vision of the artist, uncorrupted by ambition, riches, or the friendship of the rulers of this world.

"For me the break of day is adventure enough—and the water splashing in the fountain . . .

I have taken your gold, I, Ishak, who was born on the mountains, free of the woods and winds . . ."

With what humorous tenderness is the character of Hassan drawn? He is timid, fat, inclined to sentimentality, yet sensitive, imaginative, adoring Ishak's free spirit and the white flame of the poet's mind, conquering his own natural cowardice to protest against terrible inhumanity and injustice. "Thou hast broken that gentle heart, Haroun, and I have broken my lute," cries Ishak, finding his friend half-dead by that fountain whose waters now run blood-red, recognising the reality of Hassan in a court unreal as a shadow. Pervaneh is beautiful, noble, and courageous. Here are no feminine wiles or affectation, no unreality or pettiness such as adorn so many supposedly attractive heroines. Her spear-like sincerity flashes in the dark night of the soul. She is like Byron's finest lyric:—

"For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest."

Moulded of dew and fire, she can not believe that pain means anything in the face of the ideal. Rafi, her hot-headed, rash lover, is more realistic, and in the heart-rending scene when they are discussing the terrible choice offered by Haroun, separation for ever, or one day alone, and then death in unspeakable torment, he vacillates before her unwavering spirit:

"I am very young. Shall I forget to laugh if I continue to live? Shall I spend all my hours regretting you? Shall I not return to my country and comfort the hearts of those that gave me birth? Have I not my white-walled house, my books, my old friends, my garden of flowers and trees? Has the stream forgotten to sing at the end of the garden because Pervaneh comes no more?"

His fit of indecisiveness is no more than a momentary madness, and although he is no ecstatic, he follows Pervaneh, recognising the divine in her, as the disciple follows the master.

The style of the play is coloured with beautiful images. The brilliant, humorous dialogue of the first act imperceptibly yields to a crescendo of impending tragedy which almost unbearably pierces the heart.

"Forget, forget? O rose of morning and O rose of evening.
This rose has faded, and this rose is bitter, and this rose is nothing but the world,"

cries the stricken Hassan, disillusioned and weary, who yet sets out as a pilgrim in search of the wisdom begotten of sorrow.

“ We travel not for trafficking alone,
By hotter winds our fiery hearts are fanned :
For lust of knowing what should not be known
We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.”

Of Flecker's prose I have mentioned only “ The Grecians,” as being the most important essay he wrote, though his criticism of Paul Fort, Arthur Symons, John Davidson, and others is acute and stimulating.

“ It is too often forgotten,” he says in one passage, “ that though artists may be very bad critics, they are the only people fit to criticise.”

He also wrote a novel, “ The King of Alsander,” but the form does not seem to suit his peculiar genius.

As his poetry is in the main written from the objective vision of things, the few lyrics that spring from his own personal emotions are the more interesting. He seemed to have a premonition that he had few years in which to write. He hated the idea of death, and felt that the only thing that could mitigate its waste was the knowledge that his work would be honoured and loved in years to come. There was no need for his anxiety. He wore his crown of bays nobly, and is one with the starry throng of his own Grecians.

The imagination and heart of any poet, be it thousands of years hence, must inevitably go out in love and sympathy to that brother who cries thus poignantly to him across the ages :—

“ I who am dead a thousand years,
And wrote this sweet archaic song,
Send you my words for messengers
The way I shall not pass along.

I care not if you bridge the seas,
Or ride secure the cruel sky,
Or build consummate palaces
Of metal or of masonry.

But have you wine and music still,
And statues and a bright-eyed love,
And foolish thoughts of good and ill,
And prayers to them who sit above ? . . .

O friend unseen, unborn, unknown,
Student of our sweet English tongue,
Read out my words at night alone :
I was a poet, I was young.”



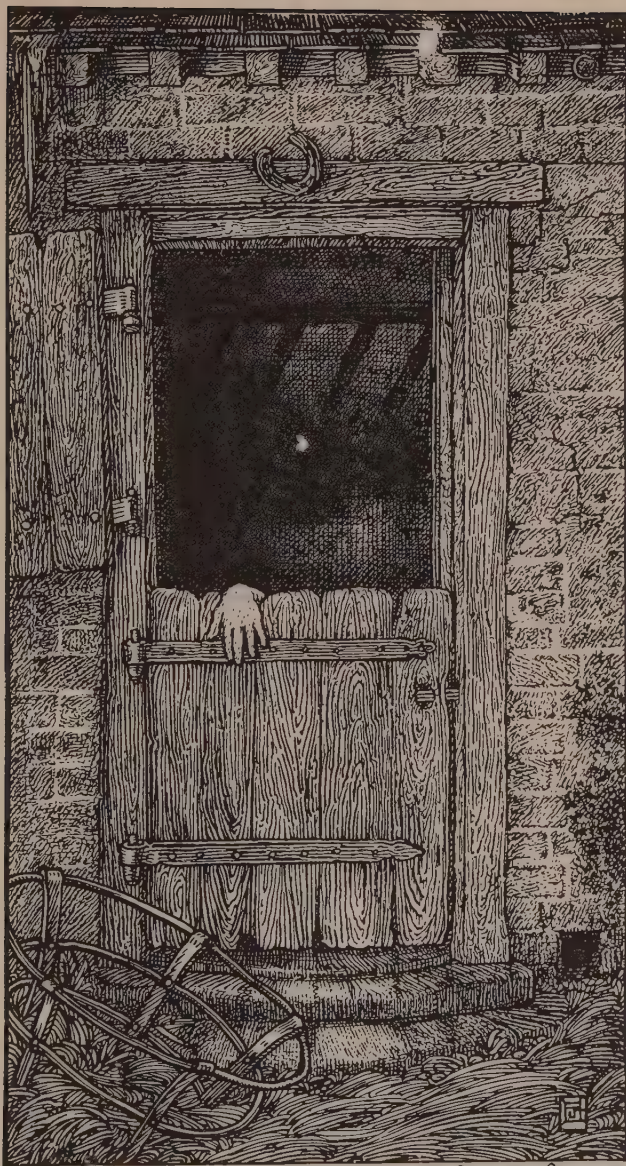
Aóm

Aithrighe.

Ba mhinic led' shaol, a mháthair,
Gur fhágas abhfad thú gan scéal,
Bhínn lán de chúram fánach
Nó ba ró leisciúl mo mhéar.

Cúpla lá ó shoin do chromas
Ag machtnamh ort, is do thóg
Mo lámh an peann, ach go hobann
Ba chuimhin liom go rabhais fé'n bhfód.

PÁDRAIG DE BRÚN.



A delicate idea to be born of the darkness.

THE HAND ON THE DOOR.

By
James Guthrie.

Nicolas Flamel.

A Play in Four Scenes.

From the French of Gerard de Nerval.

By SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.

(The first three scenes are translated from fragments left unfinished by Gerard de Nerval at the time of his death, 1855. The fourth scene is new.)

Characters :

Nicolas Flamel .. Scribe and Student of Alchemy.
Pernelle .. His wife.
Creditors.
Bailiffs.

SCENE I.

The Laboratory of Flamel.

Enter Pernelle, his wife.

Pernelle.—Not back yet ! Poor Flamel, if he could at least bring one some little hope, some news of unexpected help. But where would it come from ? One flies, as from a plague house, the home where misery reigns. Alas, it is only too evident here—in all these things about me, the instruments of alchemy, these little bottles of elixirs, these scientific books, all have borne their share in eating up our substance. And who knows, after all, if this Science is not an evil thing, that these instruments are not constructed by the foul fiend himself ! Ah, no, to lose faith in my husband, that is treachery. I do wrong to one so full of virtue, of piety. There on his very table is a bible, an open bible written with his own hand. I will read it, for the reading of it may bring solace to my mind. (*Reads.*) “And the devil taketh him up into a high mountain and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world.” (*Enter Flamel.*)

Per.—Thank God, my dear, you have returned. (*Flamel seats himself at a table and buries his face in his hands.*) What is the matter, Flamel ?

Flamel.—Nothing.

Per.—Nothing ?

Flamel.—What else is there to say for one who suffers from an evil one dare not confess, and suffers without hope of remedy?

Per.—Is there no one to help us? No friend, no relative?

Flamel.—No one. "I deserve my fate, they say, for I had a good position as a scribe and I left it to follow after science."

Per.—Alas!

Flamel.—All my discoveries, all the light I have kindled to be extinguished for want of a little miserable help!

Per.—God help us, and the creditors are threatening us again.

Flamel.—That is the most cruel part. What is there on earth more crushing, more humiliating for a soul with some pride, than debt? To have to flatter, to crawl to a man whom one despises, to have to render an account of the bread one eats, of the very air one breathes. Only to-day I met one of those fellows. "Ah, you are enjoying the air, M. Flamel? And what about that little bill of mine?" "Sir," I tell him, "I have no money, what can I do?" "Sell your soul to the devil," he retorts, "and pay me my money." God's curse on them! (*Flamel strikes the table violently, and in doing so knocks down the bible which falls to the ground.*)

Per. (*replacing it on the table open, as before*).—O, misfortune, you have thrown down the bible! (*Raising her hands*.) O, my God, my God, he did not mean to do it! (*There is a violent knocking at the door.*) Who can that be? (*She opens the door. Enter a stranger. He is dressed in the Jewish costume of the 14th century.*)

Stranger.—May the Spirit of Abraham be with you. I would speak with Master Nicolas Flamel.

Per.—There he is.

Stranger.—I would speak with him alone—on secret and profitable business. (*Exit Pernelle.*)

Flamel.—What do you want?

Stranger.—I am a Jew—by name Manassa. You are doubtless aware of the royal edict which has been issued against my unfortunate co-religionists?

Flamel.—Certainly, that you must depart from France within a month. But why this visit to me?

Stranger.—M. Flamel, you are a man of acknowledged probity.

Flamel.—Well?

Stranger.—We possess some riches, gathered together with infinite toil, and being fugitives without protection, we, naturally enough, have fears that we may be waylaid and robbed upon our journey. We have, therefore, selected you as the guardian of our riches. If you consent to act as such we propose to offer you at once a portion of our earnings, and the remainder we will claim back from you later upon a docket signed by you.

Flamel.—And what is the nature of this docket?

*Stranger (handing him a parchment).—*There it is. Will you look over it and see if the terms are agreeable to you? (*Flamel opens the parchment and places it upon the open bible which lies upon the table.*)

*Flamel.—*What is this? Your docket turns yellow all at once, and its characters take on the colour of blood.

*Stranger.—*An illusion, a mere illusion!

*Flamel.—*No! look me in the face! Ah, now I begin to understand. You have deceived me! Who are you?

*Stranger.—*Satan.

*Flamel.—*Fly from me, accursed, for my science has taught me how to exorcise the fiends of hell. Do not wait for the sacred words. Fly from me.

*Stranger.—*Why shout so loudly? Do you not know that though all the devils in hell were here, they are powerless against you save you have given yourself to them with a signed pact?

*Flamel.—*That is true, but what is your object?

*Stranger.—*That's better. Well, I came to tempt you. (*Flamel makes a movement of repulsion.*) Stay a moment. Instead of repelling me you should feel honoured that I have come to you in person instead of sending one of my underlings upon the business. A spirit of my rank does not, as a rule, take such trouble except for crowned heads or princes of the Church.

*Flamel.—*So you have gained all these, and it seems that I am the next upon your programme for seduction—the most distinguished of those who remain still unconquered in the world?

*Stranger.—*Good. A touch of pride there. Well, pride is certainly more permissible in you than in another, for no mortal in this century has attained a greater science—or more profound.

*Flamel.—*Ah! So it is by flattery that you hope to win me. A fairly common method of yours, eh? However, I thank you for your visit, but I will *not* take advantage of your kindness. If men do forsake me, I have still confidence in the mercy of heaven.

*Stranger.—*And yet you have, a moment ago, thrown to the ground a certain book and pronounced a certain word?

*Flamel.—*It seems, then, that spying is to be reckoned amongst your accomplishments?

*Stranger.—*Pooh! I knew it before that.

*Flamel.—*You are boasting. Yet, if that be true, all temptations would have some possibility of success. Well, since I cannot conceal it from you, I confess that the injustice of heaven and the ingratitude of man have left in my soul such an impression that the idea of a demoniacal alliance, the most horrible of all sacrifices that a mortal can make, begins to be a little less abhorrent to me. But if I *do* surrender to you, if I should decide to consummate this sacrifice, it must be for a price that is worth it.

*Stranger.—*Explain yourself.

Flamel.—Oh, you know only too well. You know, you know that an insatiable thirst for science devours me, that I drag with ever-increasing impatience this chain of the human spirit. That chain must be broken, that cruel injustice of fortune, those who despise me —

Stranger.—I understand you.

Flamel.—You have not heard all. That divine illumination no mortal has yet attained to I wish to possess—I want —

Stranger.—You wish, in your turn, to tempt me. But these things of which you speak—it is not from us they emanate. From us you may have secrets but not revelation. You may but make clearer those parts which are still obscure in *human science*. Surely you can see that I cannot very well be expected to help in man's progress onward and thus arm him against myself?

Flamel.—And what, then, do you offer me?

Stranger.—Riches, long life, the rarest beauties of the world.

Flamel.—And what, then, do you take me for? These things you speak of are the ambition of the man in the street. But for me, *Flamel*, do you think my happiness lies there? You speak of women—I have already a wife whom I have loved those twenty years with an unalterable love, and though she may now be getting on in years, yet I am so fashioned that I have found even yet no beauty that is preferable to hers. As to riches—no, thanks. Some few gold pieces for my actual needs—that is sufficient. If I had more I would not know what to do with it. You see, then, that you have nothing to gain here. But I am not at all sorry for having seen you, since it has given me the opportunity of proving to you that to buy a philosopher of my sort, you have not even yet sufficient wealth at your command!

Stranger.—*Flamel*! *Flamel*! farewell awhile. When you wish to continue our interview—and it may not be so very long before you do—ascend the tower of St. Jacques (you know, from tradition, that I rule there all night); there we can set down our articles of agreement without fear of interruptions, and there I will be able to say to you, in pointing out the illimitable horizon about us, “I will give you the power of this world and the glory thereof.” (*Exit.*)

Flamel. (*alone*).—He is, in truth, not so black as he is painted. His conversation is very distinguished—most agreeable, and as for his honesty, I would guarantee that it is better than that of many. I am surprised, however, that he has given up so soon!

SCENE II.

The Laboratory of Flamel.

Flamel solus.

Enter Pernelle, followed by Creditors and Bailiffs.

A Bailiff (*reading*).—“In the name of Our Sovereign King Charles and the Lords of Parliament, Nicolas Flamel, Scribe, is ordered to pay

M. Michel Gohorry and Jacques Lebreteux the sum of 20 ducats, failing which inventory will be made of the utensils and furniture in the house of the said Flamel, to be sold at once by auction in the manner usual in such case."

Flamel.—Do your business. I have no money.

A Creditor.—Gentlemen, begin the inventory.

Bailiff.—One furnace with matrix, two retorts, one alembic, six toads (*dissected*), two embryos in spirits of wine, two crucibles for gold making—*empty*; one shelf-ful of old books, namely, "The Treasury of Chemical Medicine," "The Prophecies of Raymond Lully," "The Great Illumination of the Philosopher's Stone, or The Only True Method of Making Gold."

Flamel.—Stop! That is my own book. It must remain with me.

Creditor.—Why? (*To Bailiff*)—Proceed.

Bailiff.—"The Hermetical Music and Perfect Happiness of me, Nicholas Flamel, and of Pernelle, my Wife."

Flamel.—These are my own books, don't I tell you? I wrote them; and, moreover, of what use are they to you?

Creditor.—They are on excellent parchment. Proceed.

Flamel.—Oh, this is too much. See you, gentlemen, these two books here are the result of twenty years' study. In them is all my happiness, all my hope for the future. I have no other copies of them. They are a very part of myself, something more precious to me than my body and blood.

Creditor.—Proceed.

Flamel.—No! if it must be so, put me also into your inventory and sell me also.

A Creditor (coldly).—The law does not allow of the sale of anything, on behalf of the creditors, except furniture, utensils, books, and curios.

Flamel.—Oh, you are pitiless. Leave me my books, I beseech of you.

Creditor.—Oh, be quiet. We will hardly get enough out of the lot to pay half the debt.

Flamel.—So be it. All is over—yet listen a moment. I have this moment recollected the name of a friend who will without the least doubt lend me the amount. Have the humanity to grant me a respite of twenty-four hours—twenty-four hours at the most, and you shall be paid to the last farthing. On my soul.

Creditor.—M. Flamel, you have already put us off with such hopes. But you speak of humanity; well, there, of course, you get our weaker side.

Flamel (aside).—Oh, yes.

Creditor (to the other Creditors).—After all, what can we hope to make out of all this rubbish? (*To Flamel*).—In the morning, then, at the latest, we shall be here again. (*Exeunt Creditors and Bailiffs.*)

Per.—Who is this friend who will lend you the money?

Flamel.—It is—it is the old Jew you saw a while ago.

Per.—The Jew ! Oh, he is a bad man.

Flamel.—What makes you think so ?

Per.—I don't know—but all the time he was here I felt a great weight on my heart. I wanted to pray—and I couldn't.

Flamel.—Nonsense. What ideas you have ! He is a very worthy person. Much better, in fact, than those fellows of ink and blood. Adieu, Pernelle. Kiss me. (*He embraces her.*)

Per.—How you crush me. One would think you were setting out on a long voyage !

Flamel.—What an idea ! No such thing. I love you, Pernelle. You know well that I love you. (*Embraces her again.*)

Per.—Mother of God, one would never think that we had been married twenty years.

Flamel.—Do you not love me, too, Pernelle ?

Per.—Of course, I love you. But why all this ——

Flamel.—Dear soul ! But tell me, Pernelle, would you love me still no matter what should happen ? Suppose, for instance, I had the misfortune (for where will misery not lead us ?) to become a thief, a murderer ?

Per.—I would cry and I would pray for you.

Flamel.—And you would love me still ?

Per.—It would be my duty. Did not the spouse of Cain still follow him after his crime ? But what is the meaning of all these questions ? (*Looks into his eyes.*) Jesu ! Are you concealing some terrible thing from me ? Oh, it is not possible !

Flamel.—I was only jesting. Don't you see that I was only jesting ? Adieu, adieu. (*He goes out hastily.*)

SCENE III.

The Tower of St. Jacques.

In the foreground roofs. Middle distance an empty space ; then the Tower on the summit of which the scene takes place. In the distance a view of the highest buildings of this side of Paris, Notre Dame, St. Chapelle, etc., glowing in the last rays of the sun which sets soon after the curtain rises.

Flamel (emerging from the turret door).—How high this tower is ! It seems as one ascends that the things of earth fall to our feet like fog. Paris, all Paris is there, its smoke pierced by a thousand spires. There, down there, lies the invisible network that tangles my feet. Shameful words, the despair of never attaining. The opprobrium, the dirt, which the vilest of men may throw in my face. And I must descend to it all again ! Oh, if I could but throw myself headlong on to that sea of roofs

and belfries ! That perhaps would be best. I would be dead before I reached the ground. Dead in mid air ! But I should, doubtless, in falling, alight upon one of those stony parapets which jut out half way. There I should remain all night almost dead. My limbs broken, my entrails bursting forth. What torture ! Then with daylight would come the mocking crowd, and with them my creditors crying out that in disposing of my life I had robbed them. No ! No ! No ! I would rather fall into the power of the Evil One than into the hands of those wretches of my own species. Courage, then, and let me speak with steady voice. Satan !

Satan.—What ?

Flamel.—Here I am.

Satan.—I was waiting for you. When will it please M. le docteur to avail himself of my services ?

Flamel.—I want money, that is all. Yet hear me. I cannot decide to sell my soul, but I will mortgage it willingly. Lend me the money on this security and I will pay it back later with interest.

Satan.—Do you take me for a Jew ?

Flamel.—What, then, do you want ? The remainder of my life ? My blood to drink ? And give me sufficient to pay my debts and to keep my wife alive when I am gone.

Satan.—Oh, come, come. I thought better of you than that.

Flamel.—But to go to hell—to suffer for eternity ! Is there no other way ?

Satan.—My friend, is it possible that an intellect like yours can still be steeped in these terrors of infancy, those bugbears of the ancients ? Flames, caldrons, you believe in all that ? Have you, then, an idea so base, so mistaken, of one who was for a moment the rival of God—who drew down half of the heavens with him in his fall ?

Flamel.—It is true, Satan. That was a great deed.

Satan.—Ah, the crime and the shame are the portion of the vanquished when it is the conquerors who tell the tale. Tell me, Flamel, is there anything repugnant to you in the idea of two opposing principles equal in glory and grandeur of whom the symbols, let us say, shall be Black and White, night and day ? A mountain has something of beauty, has it not ? But is there less in the Mighty Abyss ? Wherein, then, lies the bad, the contemptible, but in the mid-way, that which has neither height nor depth. You have sense enough to follow the reasoning without my further developing the point ? And to arrive of yourself at this conclusion—that there are two places of sojourn preferable to earth, namely, Heaven and Hell. That there are two beings greater and more noble than man, God and Satan.

Flamel.—Paradox is your favourite weapon, and far be it from me to argue with such a subtle doctor. But tell me—if I should make the decision—in awaiting that other world, of which you boast so much, how many years of power will you allow me in this ?

Satan.—What does it matter? I would not waste a thought on them. Whenever you say to me: "Let me depart, I have enough of this"—then—

Flamel.—That clause is certainly attractive. Well, since I must be a slave always, what matter whether it be to you or another? I have overdone my part. I have assailed too violently the eternal barriers of this world, and after that unaccomplished desire of soaring to the heights there remains to me only to plunge to the very depths.

Satan.—Come, then, sign this. Men call it a *pact*. You will see that it is a *contract*.

Flamel.—But I must first read carefully the clauses.

Satan.—That is only fair.

Flamel (*reading the pact*).—What do I see here? *Flamel* and *Pernelle*, his wife? Blot out that second name. Do you think that I am so cruel as to drag her with me in my fall?

Satan.—Nevertheless, your wife and you are one.

Flamel.—Demon!

Satan.—What would you think now of a man who, in changing for ever kingdom and country, would leave his wife and family behind him?

Flamel.—Ah, there I recognise you, Spirit of Sophistry and Lying, and already you fill me with horror, to damn her with myself, her so pious, so good. No. No. I will never consent to that. And it is ended.

Satan.—My friend, I am truly sorry, but, at the present day, debtors are of such bad faith that one cannot take too many precautions. In truth, men will very soon be more expert than—we others, and then, only then, will we cease to appear upon earth; that will be in three or four centuries at the most. But I make no complaint on that account. So many men will then be carrying on my business in the world that we can take a rest. But, meanwhile, do you really think that I am willing to run the risk of allowing your wife ("so good, so pious," as you say) to snatch you from me by obtaining your pardon from heaven, or that when you have sported at my expense she should some day lead you back to repentance and expiation? That would, indeed, be a "fool's bargain." But enough of this. Take the pact and sign it and have done.

Flamel.—I tell you that I will never sign it, and all is over between us.

Satan.—And I tell you that all is not over. Do you think that you have upset me for nothing, wasted my time and kept me from my affairs. I will hurl you from this tower now like the Son of Man, and then I will snatch away your soul, which happens, I would remind you, to be at present in a state of mortal sin.

Flamel.—Ah, cursed one. (*Satan seizes him by one arm.*)

Flamel (*making the sign of the cross with his free arm*).—*Pernelle!* *Pernelle!* (*The Tower becomes red.*)

Satan.—*Ventre-Mahon*, my feet are burning. A cloud! A cloud! (*He throws himself on to a cloud, while Flamel, on his knees praying, remains unharmed upon the Tower, which grows cool as Satan vanishes in the distance.*)

SCENE IV.

The Laboratory of Flamel. Morning.

Pernelle is seated with her head on the open bible, her hands stretched out as in sleep.

Enter Flamel, joyfully, his face lit up as with the joy of his escape. He looks about him.

Flamel.—Pernelle ! Pernelle ! *(She awakes, looks up slowly in a half-dazed fashion, as though she did not recognise him at first.)*

Flamel.—Pernelle, what is the matter ?

Pernelle.—O Flamel, my soul. *(She runs to him and embraces him.)*

Flamel.—Pernelle, dear wife, what is it ? Lift up your face ; let me see you. Ah, there are tears on your cheeks ! *(She clings to him more closely.)*

Flamel.—Why, Pernelle, you embrace me as though I had returned from some long journey.

Per.—O Flamel, my husband, my dear.

Flamel.—One would never think that we had been married for twenty years—eh, Pernelle ?

Per.—O Flamel, you will never leave me ?

Flamel.—Of course, I will never leave you, Pernelle, but why all these terrors—what is the matter ? Tell me about it. *(He leads her to a seat.)*

Per.—Oh, it was terrible.

Flamel.—What was terrible, what has frightened you, my heart ?

Per.—Oh, I was praying here at this table.

Flamel.—Yes, I knew it !

Per.—How did you know that ?

Flamel.—I will tell you again, but tell me first what has terrified you ?

Per.—I was praying—praying for you, Flamel, and while I was praying a vision came to me—oh, a fearful vision.

Flamel.—What was your vision ? Tell me about it.

Per.—I thought that I saw you, and you were in a strange place.

Flamel (excitedly).—Yes !

Per.—You seemed to be up, oh, ever so high, on a tower I think, and all about you was a great space, and then suddenly I heard you speaking—then I heard another voice—a voice that filled me with terror, for it was like the voice of that old man who came to see you, that old Jew. I could not understand what you were saying or what he replied, but after a little while I knew that you were in some great danger, and I prayed

again. Oh, I prayed as I have never prayed before. And then I saw a great red light on the tower, and heard a cry as of pain, and I don't remember anything after that, until you came and called me.

Flamel.—Pernelle, my saviour!

Per.—What do you mean?

Flamel.—Pernelle, it was not a vision. I was there on that Tower, and the old man was there with me, but he was not, as you thought, a Jew.

Per.—Who is he, then—tell me—tell me?

Flamel.—Satan. (*Pernelle shrieks and runs away from Flamel. She stands for a moment covering her face with her hands. Then she looks at Flamel, and runs to him, clinging about his neck.*)

Flamel.—There, there, sweetheart, it's all over now. I am unharmed, and I am here with you again. Indeed, it is but now, for the first time, I think, that I am really with you. I was distraught with misery and knew not what I was doing, but now, for the first time, I have seen the reality of things. I have travelled beyond those places I had thought the heights, heights that only lured me to the edge of the abyss from which your love alone has saved me. (*There is a knock at the door.*)

Flamel (frightened).—Who can that be?

Per.—It is the creditors, Poor Flamel. They have returned, and they are going to take away everything from us.

Flamel.—Creditors? I had forgotten them! But let them in, Pernelle—let them take all.

Per.—Alas, they are going to take your books, Flamel.

Flamel (smilingly).—Let them have them. They will but take the useless sophistries, those empty phrases which I wrote while I was still in the darkness. They can never take what I have but now found for the first time—that true illumination, that only real hermetic music to which you have trained me to hear. Oh, not in the heights and not in the depths, but here in the mid-way lies our happiness. Here amidst the sacred and familiar things of earth is our happiness—our haven. Here on this earth, that is sanctified by your presence, made holy by your love.

Per.—But what of the future, Flamel?

Flamel.—What of it, Pernelle? I have done with false things. I have done with the Science which has but misled me. There is always work for a scribe—and you and I will never go hungry, sweetheart, while these hands can hold a pen (*There is a louder knocking at the door.*)

(*Curtain.*)



Adventures of the Gubbaun Saor and his Son.

Re-told by ELLA YOUNG.

FOREWORD.

These tales of the Gubbaun Saor and his Son I heard from story-tellers in Clare, Achill Island, Aranmore, and the Curraun. Anthony Patton told me in Achill the story of the Shortening of the Road, and Patrick Gallagher, of the Curraun, who has by heart so many of the fine traditional sagas and poems told me of Aunya's Bargain with her Father, and the stratagem to learn the Gubbaun's Secret, the Building of the Dun, and again, the Shortening of the Road. The tale of how the Gubbaun got his Craft is from Clare.

I have not altered any incident, but I have amplified the tales, and perhaps spoiled them for some people.

In Dr. Douglas Hyde's *Széalturóe píor na Seachtmáine* will be found a story of the *Shóbán*, taken down as the story-teller told it. *Seosamh Laoiré* has such another story in his *Lúb na Caillege*. To the former I owe Aunya's saying as to the fire, and to the latter her saying with regard to her father's handiwork.

To *Proinnsias Ó Súilleabháin*, of Freiburg University, I am indebted, for the incident of the Split Tree.

THE GUBBAUN SAOR'S FEAST.



WHEN the Gubbaun Saor and his Son set foot again in Ireland the earth was glad at their coming: a Wave in the North reared itself and fell with a sound of clangorous bells and loud-voiced trumpets: a Wave in the East reared itself and fell with a sound of clashing cymbals and shrill-voiced flutes: a Wave in the South reared itself and fell with a sound of sweet singing voices, mingling with

and over-mastering the sound of timpaun and cruit and bell-branch: and all along the islands of the West and the rocky inlets went a singing reedy whisper "*Mananaun! Mananaun!*"

The rhythm of that welcoming music was a pulse of joy in the flowering grasses: the strong oaks knew it: the white bulls of the forest moved to it, tossing their moon-curved horns: it set the sea-hawks sliding down the wind, stooping in circles: it was a hand-clapping and a shout of laughter in the mountain torrents.

The Dublin Magazine

"A noble land and good is Ireland," said the Gubbaun, "my thousand blessings on it!"

Aunya made a great Feast of Welcome for them. From the four corners of the world folk came to that Feast: some that had praise-mouthed names and a proud lineage, and some that had a virtue in them of such a strange and subtle essence that it escaped a clamorous recognition. Harpers came, and sweet-voiced women, and men of learning. Kings' sons came to it riding upon white stallions with their manes and tails dyed purple, bells and apples of gold on their bridle reins: the workers in brass and copper the proud makers of beautiful things came to it, and simple poor folk came with good-will in their hearts. The Chief-Poet of Ireland came, with thirty princes in his train, a slender dark-visaged man, his hair wound upon and bound with twists of gold, his singing-robe on his shoulders that only the Chief-Poet might wear: curiously wrought it was of the feathers of bright-coloured birds. There was a king from the North, blue-eyed and huge of limb, he that was lord of dragon-prowed ships: there was a queen from the South, a woman that had many lovers. She had a pale radiant face and eyes the colour of the sky when twilight purples it—she was everywhere the one Rose of Delight. And from the Faery Hills there came three Cup-Bearers so beautiful it was a heart-ache to look upon them for they had unwithering youth beautiful as light dancing on the sea-waves—beautiful as the apple-bough beyond our reach!

The Sheeoga came, the Little People, the Small Folk of the Mountains, they who put mortals astray, for a jest, covering the pathways: or crowd upon them like comrades, running before and behind, and on either side, most joyous of helpers, to show the gaps and pick safe footing through the quagmires—mindful of freshly-querned meal set in beechen bowls for them and porringers of sweet milk. They came in their multitudes and their multitudes, they joined hands and danced round the house, laughing. Aunya sent them out a silver cup brimmed with mead: as quickly as it was emptied it filled again. They never gave it back and it is likely that even to this day it is stragvaging the world in their company.

Within the Gubbaun's house the candles of a king's feast were lighted. The djinn was there—he had measured the length of his ears by the height of the door-lintel. The Great Vizier was there, uncobwebbed of the treasure-chest. Balor's Son was there, splendid in his robes of embassy. The Hound Failinis was there, and a Phoenix-Bird that came out of Tir-nan-oge.

The feast began: it went from lavishness to lavishness, it was jewelled with strangeness as a daggerhilt is crusted with gems. Towards the close the Gubbaun raised a great Cup of crystal in his hands. The wine in it shone like a ruby: it was wine from Moy-Mell.

"Drink!" he cried, "Let each one drink to the measure of his thirst: the Cup is a well of plenty, it renews itself."

The Cup went from guest to guest, and each one that held that Marvel in his hands drank to the thing he desired to honour. When the Cup came to Balor's Son he rose up and said :

" To Balor the Munificent, and to the noble dun that is a-building ! "

The Cup flew into a thousand splinters. The wine ran down like blood.

" Dragon of Death ! " cried Balor's Son, " what evil omen is this ? "

" The venom of untruth has shattered the Cup," said the Gubbaun, " Balor's munificence was treachery. But not for this thing shall the Cup be destroyed." He gathered the fragments in his hand. " Let truth make it whole :

" Balor plotted my death and the death of my Son when the dun was finished."

The Cup became whole in the Gubbaun's hand.

" But," said Balor's Son, " in the presence of the lords and chiefs of the Fomor you named the Tool : you gave the Master-Word."

" I named my Tool," said the Gubbaun.

" The Crooked—against crookedness.

The Twist—against a twist :

and

The Twist—against treachery :

That tool I needed : that tool my hands can handle now. *I drink to the time when Balor will know that gods are not jealous of godhead ! "*

The Gubbaun drank till not a drop remained in the Cup.

" Tell Balor," he said, " that the envious heart drips poison on its own wounds, but munificence begets munificence. His mind imagined a palace : let him build it—he has the multitudinous centuries for leisure ! But this one night is ours for joy and song. Let music sound, and let the jugglers now toss up the glittering balls."

Tulkinna the Peerless One stepped forward. He had nine golden apples and nine feathers of white silver and nine discs of findruiney. He tossed them up. They leaped like a plume of sea-spray : they shone like wind-stirred flame : they whirled like leaves rising and falling. He wove them into patterns. He made them whirl like motes of dust. They danced like gauze-winged flies on a summer's eve. They tangled the mind in a web of light and darkness till at last it seemed that Tulkinna was tossing the stars.

Then came a burst of light-hearted music.

The djinn danced with the Phoenix-bird.

Aunya danced with Balor's Son.

The Chief Vizier danced with a woman out of Tir-nan-oge.

The Gubbaun Saor's Son danced with the queen from the South.

The sun and moon the stars and constellations danced to the measure of that dancing. The memory of it was honey in the mind of poets for a thousand years : it was riotous heady mead, it was wine in the veins of warriors for a thousand years, and to this hour it is laughter in the heart of the hills.

HOW THE GUBBAUN SAOR WENT INTO THE COUNTRY
OF THE EVER-YOUNG.

OT a wind stirred.

The Son of the Gubbaun Saor leaned his elbows on a gray wave-worn rock and his face on his hands.

The sea lay basking on a slant of ivory sand, spreading and stretching itself like a huge dragon that feels the sun ; drawing long breaths, lazily conscious of its own bulk and the strength it had. It was of a wonderful colour, like the sky

at dawn, like a lapis stone bathed in honey.

"Heart of my Life," cried the Son of the Gubbaun Saor, "it is not enough to be blue : if you could see the light filtering through the young leaves in a beech-wood—that greenness as of fire, that stir, that pulse of colour, you would not bask so easily. Stir yourself, Heart of my Life !"

The huge bulk of the sea responded with an almost imperceptible gesture : it was as if the dragon winked, or stretched out in lazy supercilious recognition a handful of curved claws and drew them back, as a lazy friendly cat stretches and withdraws them.

The Son of the Gubbaun Saor laughed, and as he laughed two waves ran in like dancers on tiptoe : they were like butterflies that feign to alight but rise again fluttering upward, poising themselves, swaying rhythmically : they were light as thistledown in a wind ; they were tenuous and curved and delicate like the petal of a rose—against the marvel of that blueness they were of an incredible green.

The Son of the Gubbaun Saor clapped his hands : he cried aloud : 'My Love of loves you are ! My Feathered Bird you are ! Bright Pulse of Flame you are ! My Branch with Silver Blossoms ! My One Choice !'

His eyes caressed the sea : he stretched his hands to it, but as he stood breathless with joy a voice came faintly over the grassy sward to him, a distant voice calling him by name. He turned from the rock and saw that Aunya was coming towards him over the short grass that had so many little purple and white flowers in it, low growing, close-woven in it. She walked as he had seen her walk on that first day when he came through the wind-swept gap suddenly on the plain with crimson blossoms. Her heavy hair was like spun gold. He thought the time long till he could change words with her. She did not speak till she was close to him.

"You must hasten back," she said, "the House-Father has need of us both."

"Is it a blossoming of luck or misfortune ?" asked the Son.

"I know not ;" she said. "He slept through the sunrise, he slept through the bright whiteness of day : 'tis but a little while since he wakened

with a great cry—a vision, a portent from beyond the world had come him : he would have us both together for the telling of it.”

Aunya took her husband’s hand : she did not need to hasten the home-coming.

The Gubbaun was seated in his carved chair. He had clothed himself as though he would speak with kings. His face was like a mask on one that is dead. He moved his hands feebly, they did not know whether in explanation or intreaty, but he did not speak.

“ You had a word for us,” said the Son.

“ I had the Master-Word,” said the Gubbaun, “ I had knowledge enough to make a sky of stars. Now it is gone from me.”

“ You know the talk of the birds,” said the Son, “ and the talk of the beasts, and the talk of the grasses. Is that not enough ? ”

“ I knew the joy that is in the heart of the sun. I knew the secret of life. Now it is gone.”

He said no more. He sat day-long like a stone. He lay night-long like a stone ; like a sea-crag when the water ebbs from it. For the length of time the moon takes to broaden and grow slender he was like that : strength ebbed from him.

“ My thousand griefs ! ” cried the Son, “ he will die : he will not leave behind him the wisdom of his craft ! ”

“ Go to him,” said Aunya, “ when day whitens. Ask him what tree is king of the forest. It may be that the brightness of his mind will come back to him.”

The Son of the Gubbaun rose early. He kindled a fire with boughs of the blackthorn. He dipped the palms of his hands in clear cold well-water. He wrapped himself in a cloak the colour of an amethyst stone.

He went and stood before the Gubbaun.

“ O Wonder-Smith, O Master-Builder,” he cried, “ *The Sun is mirrored in the Sacred Well*. What Tree is King of the Forest ? ”

“ I know a Forest,” said the Gubbaun, “ the roots of it go down deep deep into the heart of the earth : the branches of it spread among the stars : the stars are fruit upon its branches. The leaves of it make a singing in my mind—singing and sleep.”

The Son came forth from the chamber.

“ Go to him,” said Aunya, “ when to-morrow whitens.”

The Son of the Gubbaun rose early. He kindled a fire with boughs of the yew. He dipped the palms of his hands in clear cold well-water. He wrapped himself in a cloak the colour of embers.

He went and stood before the Gubbaun.

“ O Wonder-Smith, O Master-Builder,” he cried, “ *The Moon moves whitely in the Sacred Wood*. What Tree is King of the Forest ? ”

“ I know a Forest,” said the Gubbaun, “ a dark Forest—the leaves of it are days and years, the twisted boughs of it are centuries and

millenniums—and I am tangled in its dark crooked ways : I am caught in its thorny branches : I am lost.”

The Son came forth from the chamber.

“Go to him,” said Aunya, “at the whitening of to-morrow.”

The Son of the Gubbaun rose early. He kindled a fire with boughs of the hazel. He dipped the palms of his hands in clear cold well-water. He wrapped himself in a cloak that was spun from threads of white silver and wrought upon with red gold.

He went and stood before the Gubbaun.

“O Wonder-Smith, O Master-Builder,” he said, “*The Sun beholds his image in the Moon. What Tree is King of the Forest ?*”

The Gubbaun opened his eyes and looked steadily at him.

“Son,” he said, “that is soon told. The King of the Forest Trees is the wise gentle Holly.”

The Son knew that but a moment remained in which to surprise the the secret of his father’s craft. He beat his hands together, he beat his forehead, he cried aloud in a voice of lamentation : “Ochone, Ochone, for the Dun of Angus : it is fallen—fallen !”

The Gubbaun raised himself on the bed.

“The Dun of Angus has not fallen” he said, “I built it : it could not fall. It has the strength of rocks. It has the strength of adamant. Storm cannot shake it. It will blunt the teeth of gnawing centuries.”

“Tell your Son, O Master-Builder, how you built it. How did you lay the stones of it together ?”

“I built it,” said the Gubbaun, “*with a caid on a caid, a caid over a caid, and a caid between two caids.* The Dun of Angus stands !”

“It stands,” cried the Son.

The Gubbaun fell back upon the bed, his face was the colour of wax.

“Son,” he said, “make a music for me : my hands are done with labour.”

The Son of the Gubbaun took up his flute. He played a music from the Faery Hills. Thin and faint at first and of an unearthly sweetness it filled the mind as with a heaven of stars. It had the sound of every instrument and the sound of singing voices in it. Slow rhythms moved through it like sea-waves : light fierce rhythms leaped like flame : it turned and twisted on itself in intricate mazes and dances of delight. It rose and swelled till it filled the tent of the sky. It slid away into hollows and secret caverns of the éarth—chilled and drenched with sweetness. It ebbed and ebbd, withdrawing itself as Cleena’s Wave withdraws—a ripple of foam on the void—an echo—a soundless abysm.

The Son of the Gubbaun Saor laid down his flute. No one spoke : but a sudden wind shook the house, and on it there drifted out of a clear sky petals of snow white as blossoms shaken from the Silver Branch.

The Gubbaun Saor was dead.

THE GREAT PIAST.



HE house of the Gubbaun Saor was so silent that it seemed to listen to itself. Outside there was a sound of multitudinous voices lamenting ; thin, reedy voices ; sweet, high, singing voices ; deep, sorrowful voices ; voices like thunderous bells.

The Son of the Gubbaun Saor flung wide the door. He thought at first that the sea had taken the land up to the every threshold. Then he saw that it was the Great Piast herself, drawn fold on fold from the Deep. Writhing and glittering she lay there, scale on scale, and every scale was like a wave that is curved and crested. Like the green light in a sea-hollow was the hooded light about her head.

"O Mighty One, O Piast of the Deep," said the Gubbaun Saor's Son, "why do you lament with so great a lamentation?"

"It is the question," said the Great Piast, "that I came to ask of you."

End.

NOTE.—Professor Rhys has pointed out that in a series of Welsh tales the God Manannan is represented as helping and abetting his Son, Lugh. In the tales of the Gubbaun we have a series of the same kind. The Gubbaun is Goibniu the Smith, whose other name is Culainn, whose other name is Manannan, and the Son is the same who adventures in the Welsh tales, Lugh, whose other name is, perhaps, Angus Oge. Aunya is the great Goddess Aine or Fand or Dana represented variously as the daughter and wife of Manannan.

CORRECTION.

On page 211 (October Number) for "I will come back to it by stepping on the ditches and the walls by the side of the road," read "I will come back to it stepping on the ditches and the walls by the side of the road."



Choses Vues.

By STANTON PYPER.

III.

“*Moi j'ai vu cela.*” (Le centenaire dans “*l'Immortel.*”)

A NEW chapter in my life was about to open, but before entering upon it I should like to turn back for a few moments and glance at scenes and faces once familiar to me in the days before I left Ireland, not to return for many a long year.

In those now remote times we had many things to be thankful for, had we but known it. We had no phonographs, no cinemas, no automobiles, no electric railways, and the telephone and Rudyard Kipling, though already discovered, were still comparatively innocuous. Above all, we had no pestiferous “world war” and no lying propaganda—unhappy perversion of an honourable word (*de propaganda fide*).

In Ireland the sky was still dark, but the dawn was beginning to show itself. The Land War, the greatest struggle in the country's history, had been won, and thus a sure foundation laid for all that was to follow.

Most of my memories centre round White Hall, the home of Katharine Tynan, as she then was called. Thither a few of us would betake ourselves nearly every Sunday, wet or fine, always sure of a warm welcome, and a long and delightful evening in the company of kindred spirits. An added zest was due to the journey itself, for we had first to reach Tallaght, then at what might be called “a good step” from Dublin, and leaving Tallaght behind us, plunge into a maze of bye-roads, with a final short-cut across a field. In wet weather all this was somewhat of an undertaking, but we were always stoutly shod, and laughed at the muddy pools through which we often had to scramble.

To reach the village of Tallaght itself we had to take the “train,” as the country people always called the steam tram. As the “train” never left Rathfarnham punctually, but was always late in starting, we never failed to secure seats, inside ones if possible, in order to avoid the rain of soot belched forth from the funnel which poked itself out of the front of the vehicle. Tales were current of tourists, who clad in holiday attire, climbed upon the roof prepared to “enjoy the view,” and reached their destination looking like chimney sweeps. At night it was a great sight to see this queer monster swaying dizzily along, a trail of fiery sparks flying far behind it. However, in spite of all its shortcomings, we blessed the day that gave it birth, for without its timely aid most of us would have been hard bestead to reach Tallaght.

On these expeditions my constant companion was Frederick Gregg, who deserves a word of mention. His father, a worthy burghess of Dublin City, was one of the few, all too few, Protestant Home Rulers at that time to be found in Ireland. He was a man of character and courage to boot; and he needed courage to openly take the side of Ireland against England. Whatever they may be now, the Protestant Churches were then, one and all, bitterly hostile to everything Irish, and all their weight and influence were thrown on the Anglicising side. Irish "society," such as it was, followed suit, and the lot of any Irish Protestant who called himself a Nationalist was not to be envied.

Gregg was not very brilliant, but he had a fund of quiet humour, and, what I think chiefly attracted me, a very thorough knowledge and appreciation of French literature.

He and John O'Leary were, I fancy, the only two who read French in preference to English. John O'Leary was our Grand Old Man, dignified, venerable, grey-bearded. His face was, I think, in every feature, one of the finest I have ever seen. Soon after his death a writer in one of the leading London papers remarked in the course of an obituary notice that John O'Leary "did not look an Irishman." It would be interesting to know just what an Irishman is expected to look like. In spite of his long years of exile spent in Paris and his love for the language, John never learned to speak French correctly, but all his spare money went to buy books. He would wander along the *quais*, stopping at every book-stall, and come back to his rooms with an armful of books. As soon as he had read a book, he would pitch it to the other end of the room, where it would lie till some friend would pick it up and walk off with it. His pipe was his constant companion, and it was said he had one hung by a piece of twine from the ceiling, so that he could smoke in bed, and drop off to sleep without any fear of setting the sheets on fire.

After scraping the mud off our shoes, a process which usually took up a good deal of time, we found ourselves in the cozily furnished room which was K. T.'s very own, where only her own guests were admitted. That particular part of the house was thatched, and I often wished that White Hall was all thatched, but it was not so; the rest of the building was covered with those depressing dark blue slates that one sees everywhere in Ireland, because they are more genteel than thatch, and have that decent air of gloomy respectability which indicates opulence.

We were not the only visitors who came on Sunday afternoon. There were others who came for the more serious purpose of playing cards. They assembled in a different part of the house, and we met them only at the dinner table. I think they rather looked down upon us—needy book-lovers that we were. There was, fortunately, one topic on which all could discourse with genuine heartiness, the wonderful *uisge bheatha* with which K. T.'s good old father regaled us. Where or how he got it I never found out, but I have never tasted anything like it, and I doubt if its like will ever be met with again. It was the true *uisge bheatha* or

aqua vitae. When did that detestable emasculated word *whiskey* first come into use? The Tudor English still had enough energy left to say *usquebaugh*, which, after all, is not so far from the real sound. As for *whiskey*, it suggests nothing but soda water and other modern English abominations.

One thing only about K. T.'s room displeased me, the inscription she had placed over the door—Browning's:

“God's in His heaven, all's right with the world.”

The cock-sure optimism of that line has always been distasteful to me; it suggests the man who has dined well and sits with legs stretched out in front of a comfortable fire. *Tout est pour le mieux dans le meilleur des mondes possibles!* Gazing round on the desolate grass-grown countryside, once well-tilled fields, or passing through Balrothery, with its grinning skeletons of houses, a feeling of irritation always rose within me at the thought of that complacent Anglo-Saxon philosophy of life, born of middle-class wealth and a comfortable balance of exports over imports.

Yeats, of course, was there, as yet plain W. B.; “Willy Yeats” to his feminine admirers; tall and lithe, with jet-black locks and pale thoughtful face, few could mistake him for what he was, and yet, in spite of our admiration for him, we could not help feeling that he had already begun to act the part. With the years this carefully-studied manner grew upon him, and some years later, walking with him one day in London, I overheard two Cockneys, who were discussing his appearance, both agree that “’e must be a hactor.”

Like the lamented Abbé Jérôme Coignard, Yeats had already become a follower of Paracelsus, and was full of signs and wonders and of spirits of air, earth, water, fire, though, unlike the Abbé, I fancy his relations with them were purely platonic.

I take some credit to myself for having recognised in Yeats, from the very first, something that set him apart from the rest of us, and I subscribed to the first volume he ever published. He read to me some of his early verses, and I remember an incident that occurred in the course of one of these readings. For greater privacy we had climbed to the loftiest gallery in that dismal building known as the Museum of Science and Art. There, in absolute solitude, surrounded by glass-cases, Yeats began to read. The verses I have entirely forgotten; all that I can recollect is that “battle” rhymed with “rattle.” As he read on, Yeats grew more and more animated, and, I suppose, I involuntarily shared his animation. But just as we reached the climax of the poem, a voice came booming up from the depths below: “Come down ower that, yez are makin’ too much noise,” and, peering over the balustrade, we saw far beneath us the huge blue-coated form of a Dublin Metropolitan policeman. In those days a policeman’s word was still law, and we reluctantly descended.

How often did I pity the lot of the unfortunate policemen doomed to confinement in that building. Even had the dignity of their calling permitted them to engage in conversation with total strangers, here there were none to converse with. From time to time some venturesome individual could be seen to enter and then hurriedly beat a retreat, appalled by the interminable array of incomprehensible objects that surrounded him. But for the fact that the policemen shut up here had successfully cultivated the art of sleeping while in a standing position, I do not see how they could ever have survived the ordeal.

In fairness to the few visitors who at rare intervals penetrated into this forbidding solitude, I must say that they appeared to sympathise with the policeman on duty, and never woke him up. Once only do I remember such a thing happening. A farmer and his wife, bent on "doing" the sights of the metropolis, and in all probability frugally bent on seeing all that they possibly could see for nothing, insisted one day on examining the specimens. After a few minutes of bewildered staring, their eyes at length rested on some fossil lizards. Here, at last, was something which had, at any rate, visible shape, but what could it be, and why in a glass-case? After hurriedly consulting his wife, the farmer appealed to the blue-coated giant who was slumbering peacefully in the background. Slowly the policeman came back to consciousness, and for a moment a look of consternation appeared upon his face, but it was only for a moment; pulling himself together and glaring wrathfully upon the disturbers of his rest, he snorted: "Man, don't be botherin' me; can't ye see they're only sculptures?"

Whereupon the farmer and his wife slunk away abashed.

Besides Yeats, there came occasionally to White Hall a shy brown-bearded young man in spectacles, with a strong Ulster accent. The brilliance of W. B. seemed to eclipse him, and at that time few would have prophesied that in years to come the shy young man would be known far and wide as A. E., poet and philosopher. At that time he seemed almost inarticulate, but when he did speak, one felt that within him there were thoughts struggling for utterance, and that one day he would shape them into words.

King, who did the literary criticism for Labouchere's "Truth," came regularly, always on a bicycle. He lived in some remote part of the County Wicklow, and how he contrived to reach White Hall and find his way back over the mountains without breaking his neck was a constant source of amazement to us.

Last, but by no means least, was Douglas Hyde, then in all the vigour of early manhood, with a countless store of tales and songs and ballads in Gaelic and English. I remember well how one night in spite of all our efforts, we missed the last "train" home. Catching this last "train" was always an exciting event. We hardly ever missed it, but that was chiefly due to the fact that it was nearly always late. Still, very often our hearts were in our mouths, for missing it meant walking back to Dublin.

The "train" stopped in front of a friendly tavern, and we usually had time for some refreshment after our hurried walk before we took our seats. On the occasion to which I refer, four of us, including Douglas Hyde, arrived, as we thought, in good time, and gaily entered the hostelry for a drink. Judge of our dismay when we heard that the "train" had already passed. By some unforeseen chance it had for once arrived punctually. There was nothing for it but to walk home. After a few more glasses to keep up our spirits on the way we started off. Luckily it did not rain, and we found ourselves after a few minutes tramping on blithely enough in the cool, fresh night air.

To pass the time, someone suggested that we should all sing songs in turn, and this we did. When it came to Douglas Hyde's turn he began an old ballad, in English, all about some "farmer's lovely daughter." What the story was I have clean forgotten, except that some wicked squire fell in love with her. One thing, though, I do remember well, that it seemed literally to go on for ever. As verse succeeded verse, we all thought surely this is the last one, but it was not so, and we were already on the outskirts of Dublin before Douglas Hyde at last stopped and said to us: "Well, that's all I can remember of it."

I remember, during the singing, someone said: "Well, we'll be lucky if we're not arrested for creating a disturbance," and, as a matter of fact, that might easily have been our fate, for at that particular time it was the easiest thing in the world to be arrested, especially at night, on any charge, or even on no charge at all. However, as luck would have it, we did not see a single "peeler" between Tallaght and Dublin, although in theory the roads were all supposed to be patrolled at night by the R.I.C., who, at that time, flourished in all their semi-military glory, and were not the tame-looking ordinary "polis" they afterwards became.

The record of those years would not be complete for me without the mention of one more name, a name probably forgotten by all but a few, the name of Lippman. He came to us in Dublin as a being from another world. We had all heard or read of Russia, of the Tsar, of the Nihilists, but it was all dim and remote. Then suddenly there descended upon us, in the flesh, a real authentic Nihilist, one who had engaged in terrible secret enterprises, had carried his life in his hands a score of times, and had, thanks to extraordinary luck, escaped by the merest miracle from the hands of the sleepless secret police. How we hung upon Lippman's words as he told us his story, a story more fascinating than any romance we had ever read, and yet a page from life. How dwarfed and petty our little struggles seemed by the side of this Titanic conflict, a conflict in which the Titans, repulsed again and again, yet caused the gods on high to tremble on their thrones.

In those days we in Dublin were a simple folk, and we measured everyone by the standard of our own good faith. It never occurred to any of us to doubt the truth of Lippman's statements, and we shuddered

as he told us that even in Dublin he did not feel secure, that even in that remote spot the Russian secret police might entrap him. The way in which he discussed the personalities of the Revolutionary leaders, all of whom he knew intimately, particularly fascinated us. Most of these men were totally unknown to us; two or three names alone were more or less familiar to us through the papers which, from time to time, reported some Nihilist plot, invariably crushed, but only to give birth to another plot, if possible, more audacious than the one before. Looking back now, it seems almost unbelievable that in those days the Russian Revolutionist was sure of a warm welcome in almost every country in the world. Especially was this the case in England and Germany, where all, from the highest to the lowest, bade the Nihilist welcome. Whether this welcome was due purely to a passionate hatred of tyranny and a single-minded love of freedom, or was inspired by more self-interested motives, might, at this time of day, be fairly considered an arguable question. It might even be contended that possibly the Nihilist was welcomed more as an enemy of the Russian Government than as an enemy of tyranny, and that the Anglo-Saxons and the Germans thirsted more for the downfall of the Russian Empire than for an era of universal liberty. Be that as it may, we in Dublin had no ulterior motives; we sympathised with all who, in any land, were fighting for freedom, and even the fact that Lippman was a Jew did not prejudice us against him, for we knew that the Jews were, in Russia, the especial victims of government repression, and there never has been in Ireland any feeling against Jews simply because they are Jews.

Lippman himself was a clever and brilliant young fellow, and we were all genuinely sorry when he was arrested in Dublin on the commonplace charge of issuing cheques without having funds to meet them. We were even willing to believe, as Lippman more than hinted, that this was but one more subtly planned move of the dreaded Secret Police. Howbeit, subsequent revelations sadly shook our faith in Lippman, and in the end we had to reluctantly face the facts that our hero was not a Nihilist at all, but just a clever young Jew from Odessa, who left Russia in time to escape arrest for embezzlement, and who had wisely selected Dublin for his place of refuge as being the most simple-minded and credulous city in Europe.

Poor Lippman! in spite of it all we liked him. We forgave him for humbugging us; in fact, I think we rather admired him for his wonderful imaginative gifts. He had, I verily believe, a certain hypnotic power, and his large and luminous dark eyes seemed to draw one to him. He was duly tried, found guilty, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, but such was his strange power over people that the governor of the prison came entirely under his influence, and declared himself a firm believer in his innocence. He was eventually released, and left for New York, supplied with funds by some of his admirers. In New York he was known as Count Zuboff, the distinguished Nihilist who had just escaped from a

Russian prison, and he prospered exceedingly for a season. But, alas, for poor Lippman! he did a most foolish thing. He published, as his own, verses from the slender volume of poems published in Dublin by Frederick Gregg, of whom I have already spoken. Unknown to Lippman, Gregg had already reached America, and obtained a position on a well-known New York paper. The exposure that followed drove Lippman out of New York, and he wandered west. What became of him I could never find out; one rumour had it that he had committed suicide—I hope it was not true.

I knew Lippman pretty intimately, and found his conversation always stimulating. I shall never forget standing with him one day on the steps of Ponsonby's book-shop, as it used to be, looking down on a procession that passed beneath us with bands and banners. In those days we were very fond of bands and processions and oratory. After gazing for some minutes in silence at the procession, Lippman turned to me and said: "My dear chap, you are all too fond of processions in this country. They will never get you very far. You will never frighten England with bands and banners. Some day you will realise that something sterner must be used."

I have never forgotten those words.

(*À suivre.*)



A JOLLY BOY.

After a Woodcut by E. M. Darwin.

The Most Popular English Poet.

HAS Mr. A. E. Housman many readers in this country? I don't know; I fancy not, though I have seen, of course, in our shops *A Shropshire Lad* in that tiny, inexpensive edition with red covers—royal 32mo, 1907-8—which must have sold to so many thousands in England. I should think that the this-worldly melancholy of *A Shropshire Lad* and of *Last Poems*, the essence of Mr. Housman, is a little outside the range of our taste and habit, fashioned as these have been by our own poets, Mr. Yeats and the Irish literary movement. I remember, however, hearing Mr. Russell quote for its “curious music” from a piece in *A Shropshire Lad*:

Oh, see how thick the gold cup flowers
Are lying in field and lane,
With dandelions to tell the hours
That never are told again.

Oh, may I squire you round the meads
And pick you poesies gay?
—’Twill do no harm to take my arm.
“You may, young man, you may.”

Some lads there are, ’tis shame to say,
That only court to thieve,
And once they bear the bloom away
’Tis little enough they leave.

Then keep your heart for men like me
And safe from trustless chaps;
My love is true and all for you.
“Perhaps, young man, perhaps.”

It is a charming thing, but not quite in Mr. Housman's most characteristic mood.

Mr. Housman is a professor at Cambridge, and the brother of a more prolific writer, Mr. Laurence Housman. His first book, *A Shropshire Lad*, began to “catch on” in or about 1907 or 1908; I do not remember hearing of it or of the author a few years earlier when I was at Cambridge. But the poems were first printed in 1896, and this first edition must be greatly coveted by collectors. 1907 was the year in which our Synge also came into his own, and the spirit of the two writers is not unlike, making due allowance for the very marked national characters of each. Mr. Housman “prefaces” are even more laconic than Synge's. Mr. Housman has only twice, and at long interval, published a book. This is a curious literary career; we have to be satisfied with a curt explanation, written on the fly-leaf of *Last Poems*, 1922:

It is unlikely that I shall ever be impelled to write much more. I can no longer expect to be revisited by the continuous excitement under which in

the early months of 1895 I wrote the greater part of my other book ; and it is best that what I have written (since) should be printed while I am here to see it through the press.

He is a classical lecturer at Cambridge, and undergraduates, who know his poetry by heart, look on him with respect, as hero-worship is not proper to our times. He shuns publicity, and one never sees his name in print except a propos of the two little books of verse. No ; I forget—once, as a voter for Cambridge University, I received a circular, signed by him and other local luminaries, asking me to vote for the Tory candidate—a very crusted Tory, by the way. His brother, Mr. Laurence Housman, a charming writer, is a feminist, a pacificist, and many other such things.

It is proper and fitting that “ a pessimist ” of the type Mr. Housman’s poetry shows him to be should not encourage Socialists, and other vain disturbers of our mortal lot, and one remembers how Schopenhauer left a part of his fortune to the Property Defence League of Berlin. But, as I need hardly say, Mr. Housman does not bring politics into his verse, which now and then, however, reveals the English patriot, sturdy but unaggressive. How many poems on Queen Victoria’s Jubilee of 1887 survive ? A *Shropshire Lad* opens on this theme :

From Clee to heaven the beacon burns,
The shires have seen it plain,
From north and south the sign returns
And beacons burn again.

Look left, look right, the hills are bright,
The dales are light between,
Because ’tis fifty years to-night
That God has saved the Queen.

It is a couth and seemly acknowledgment of the poet’s loyalties, old-fashioned sounding to-day, and of an England that had not yet absorbed its Kipling—or its Lloyd-George. Here we note the one illusion that this stoic has permitted himself. Ay, look, he exclaims :

Ay, look : high heaven and earth ail from the prime foundations.

Nevertheless, the war of 1914 breaks out, and he praises in an *Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries* his compatriots who, as it seems to his love and zeal, upheld the “ sorry scheme ” :

Their shoulders held the sky suspended ;
They stood, and earth’s foundations stay.

Like Rudyard Kipling, Mr. Housman is the poet of the British soldier, but without the latter’s touch of condescension, or his hierarchical notions of society. There is no class-consciousness in Mr. Housman’s soldier poems. We see his “ Tommies ” not in barracks, but on leave, in quiet country places, and, to tell the truth, getting, as a rule, into sad

mischief, even to the point of the gallows. Mr. Housman's stories in verse "feature" the prison yard and the gallows tree, and because of these unhappy endings his art and mind have been compared with Mr. Hardy's. But we should say that there is a profound difference between the plain man's pessimism of Mr. Housman and the metaphysical outcries and questionings of the author of *The Dynasts*. The one is a Roman, classical thing, the other is neo-Calvinism. I do not mean that the plain man consistently feels or professes any sort of pessimism, but merely that Mr. Housman's "reading of life," as a bitter-sweet vanity (more bitter than sweet), is such as might occur, and, indeed, does occur, to everyone at times; whereas the somewhat transcendental negations of Mr. Hardy are caviare to the general. When one of the Shropshire lads comes to a bad end, well, maybe heredity is to blame, and anyhow it is the way of the world; we are not asked to believe that he is the sport of Immortals with a taste for playing practical jokes.

But to come to instances of Mr. Housman's art, to the lyrics, almost all of them inspired by the pity of life, with a background of lovely countryside. There is nothing to come, and our passing sorrows outweigh greatly our transitory joys. Still, the poet would not have sung had he not known of sweet experiences: courtship, music, enchanted weather. No poet has written a more beautiful farewell to life as such than Mr. Housman in the last lyric, *Fancy's Knell*, of his *Last Poems*:

Ours were idle pleasures,
Yet, oh, content we were,
The young to wind the measures,
The old to heed the air;
And I to lift with playing
From tree and tower and steep
The light delaying
And flute the sun to sleep.

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Wenlock Edge was umbered
And bright was Abdon Burf,
And warm beneath them slumbered
The smooth green miles of turf;
Until from grass and clover
The upshot beam would fade,
And England over
Advanced the lofty shade.

The lofty shade advances,
I fetch my flute and play;
Come, lads, and learn the dances
And praise the tune to-day.
To-morrow, more's the pity,
Away we both must hie
To air the ditty,
And to earth, I.

The Dublin Magazine

The preceding untitled poem has an equal charm •

On russet floors, by waters idle,
The pine let falls its cone ;
The cuckoo shouts all day at nothing
In leafy dells alone ;
And traveller's joy beguiles in autumn
Hearts that have lost their own.

This is also a farewell ; with a maxim added for the reader :

Possess, as I possessed a season,
The countries I resign,

—and one thinks of that brief allusion in the preface to the “ continuous excitement ” which “ visited ” Mr. Housman when he was writing the majority of his earlier poems :

We'll to the woods no more,
The laurels are all cut,
The bowers are bare of May,
That once the Muses wore.

If we were to make too much of Mr. Housman's sad philosophy we might be hard put to it to explain why he should have troubled to write verses. And trouble and pains went to his work ; for, though he is not master of so exotic a craft as a Bridges or a Yeats, there is nothing slap-dash in his art, for all the simplicity of the effects. Mr. Housman has at his control, as he often shows, many lovely technical devices, such as that, for instance, which he employs so happily for the penultimate line of each stanza in *Fancy's Knell*, the poem from which I have lately quoted. Still, he himself protests in some epigrammatic lines against the notion of regarding poetry as a dope, or a refuge from philosophy :

Why, if 'tis dancing you would be,
There's brisker pipes than poetry.
Say, for what were hop yards meant,
Or why was Burton built on Trent ?
Oh, many a peer of England brews
Livelier liquor than the Muse.

Poetry is for Mr. Housman the companion of his philosophy. I have described Mr. Housman as the most popular of living English poets ; this may seem strange, and certainly he is not popular with the public which admires the uplift of Miss Wheeler Wilcox. But he is the poet with whose mood the younger generation of taste likes best to boast itself akin and in accord. It is not surprising, when we take the circumstances of the time into account, that a stoical pessimism should be vogue. But some of the young write as though pessimism were itself an artistic merit, which it is no more than optimism. We know Mr. Housman to be a poet for the same reason that we know cheerful Browning to be one, because he has expressed an individual lyrical personality. It is not a

question of the logical soundness of his thought, or of its originality ; and to value Mr. Housman, as has been done, on the ground that his poetry may purge us of what remains of the gross optimism of our grandfathers, is a sad absurdity. For that matter, the despised nineteenth century produced more radical melancholists than Mr. Housman, Leopardi, for example :

Ed io pur seggo sovra l'erbe, all' ombra
e un fastidio m'ingombra
la mente : ed uno spron quasi mi punge
si che, sedendo, piu che mai son lunge
da trovar pace o loco.
E pur nulla non bramo
e non ho fino a qui cagion di pianto.

It produced in Victorian England itself James Thomson, and also many more admirers than are now of the "Thoughts" of Marcus Aurelius, who is a Mr. Housman of antiquity turned bore and rather prosy.

J. M. H.

A Day at Delville with Swift.

By KATHLEEN M. O'BRENNAN.

IT was in the cold sunshine of a November afternoon that I set out to see Swift at Delville. They told me I should find him at home about that time, probably in the garden, for tradition in the neighbourhood says that he is usually there before the close of the evening ; sometimes sitting with Stella in the little temple hidden in the trees, or wandering alone in the grounds gazing out on the ships in Dublin Bay or looking down on the old city where he was once a popular idol, and whose fame he made known to the world. For with that strange, sad, powerful, impassioned Gael is ever associated the city of Dublin. He buried here a romance which has fascinated the world, and baffled the centuries.

One must be a Dubliner, perhaps, to understand the sacredness of the old house, within whose walls so much history was written, and where the elegance, grace, beauty, wit, and brilliancy of the eighteenth century vied with all Europe. It was a period of which we have now but the memory, but that memory was no dream as I went through the small doorway to the courtyard where the old sedan chairs once passed, and where alighted all that was charming and beautiful of the society of the period.

There is no air of mystery about the place, as the high walls might suggest, because the lovely old Georgian house, on a rising ground, looks over the walls, still apparently taking the friendliest interest in the old city and its inhabitants. Many an evening did Delany, Sheridan, and Helsham watch for glimpses of Swift as he rode up from the city to join the brilliant circle and dine at the hospitable board. The house was originally built by Dr. Helsham and Dr. Delany, both Fellows of Trinity College. Together they built the house, and called it Hel-Del-Ville. In later years, when Dean Delany married Mary Granville, she converted the house into a shrine of Stella. Mrs. Delany revered the associations of those two spirits, and it was with her artistic hands and with deep affection that she preserved the memory of Stella in every room. All the elaborate shell decorations on the ceiling were done by Mrs. Delany, and in every room she had placed a star (stella) in marble inlaid, and star-shaped windows in the little oratory which opens off what was then the library. How Mrs. Delany loved the house ! Its every detail she has described so minutely to her friends, telling of her work, her paintings, her prints, her embroidery and her upholstery. In one of her letters to her sister she wrote :

“The drawingroom is hung with tapestry, on each side of the door a japan chest, the curtains and chairs crimson mohair, between the windows large glasses with gilt frames, and marble tables under them. The bedroom within hung with crimson damask, bed-chairs and curtains the same; the closet within it is most delightful. I have a most extensive and beautiful prospect of the town and harbour of Dublin and a range of mountains of various shapes. This bed-chamber and closet are on the left hand of the drawingroom; on the right is a very pretty square room, with a large dressing-room within it. It stands on a rising ground, and the courtyard is large enough for a coach and six to drive around commodiously. The front of the house is simple but pretty, five windows in front, two stories high, with a portico at the hall door, to which you ascend by six steps, but so sheltered by the roof of the portico that it is secured from rain. On the right is the eating parlour, 26 feet long and 16½ wide, with a projection in the middle which opens 13 foot, and is eight deep, with three windows, and large enough for two sideboards; one window between the tables, and one at each side, which lights the room very agreeably: it is a very charming room, cool in summer and warm in winter; the chimney is at one end, and a window over against it. On the left is another large room. At the end of the hall is a very neat stone staircase, well finished with stucco, which leads to the apartment which I have described above. Beyond the staircase, below is a little hall; on the right hand is a small parlour where we breakfast and sup; out of it, our present bedchamber, and a large light closet within it; it is but a small apartment, but very pretty, and lies pleasantly in the gardens, and as we sit by the fireside we can see the ships ride in the harbour.”

The house was, of course, empty when I visited it. Some panes of glass were broken, evidently by the boys of the village, who had tried to get into the house, but otherwise it is in a splendid state of preservation. How long will it remain so? Will it soon be a landmark of fallen grandeur, like so many of the other beautiful homes of the past for which our city is famed, or will it be rescued as a National memorial? As I strolled through each room I could not but feel what a link Delville is in the history of Dublin, but especially is it a theatre of the great Swift Drama, where for a quarter of a century that stormy Irish genius took shelter with a few choice spirits while he kept up alone a perpetual war against the mighty men in power, and remained “invulnerable if not victorious.”

I strolled into each room picturing so many gatherings, looking through the windows as so many had gazed at the haymakers out in the fields or the deer scampering in the park, hearing the harpist play outside under the oak tree, practising “his best selection for the guests of the evening.” Down stairs the elaborate kitchen, wine cellars, and servants’ quarters reminded one of the dinners so carefully prepared for the *bon viveurs* of the day, when the choicest wines were produced by Mrs. Delany for Mr. Eccles of Glasnevin, or Mrs. Donnellan of Finglass, or the Vesey of Lucan, when they paid a return dinner call, or the members of the old House rode up after a sitting to tell the exciting events of the moment. And the dinner—Mrs. Delany describes such a one.

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"Here follows my bill of fare for to-day," she writes to her sister :—

First Course :
 Turkeys Endove (Turkey with Endive)
 Boyled Neck of Mutton
 Greens, etc.
 Soup
 Plum Pudding
 Roast Loin of Veal
 Venison Pasty

Second Course :
 Partridge
 Collared Pig
 Creamed Apple Tart
 Crabs
 Fricasse of Eggs
 Pigeons

No Dessert to be had

And between the courses the sparkling wit and brilliant conversation, more rare than the finest wine ! Of this circle Jonathan Swift was the personage of the day. Even those who detested him most had to admit his power. To the credit of Dublin, Swift was fully appreciated by the populace of his time, and it was only later, and through the invidious writings of his enemies, that his prestige waned. Thackeray, one of his principal detractors, said : "The world never saw as brilliant a circle of wits as met together in that day, and of this circle Swift was the centre in right, not alone of his ability, but also of his sociability. And he was supreme, remember, not alone as a wit, but as a statesman among statesmen." And while Thackeray goes on to explain that sociability and amiability need not go together, he adds : "Swift was, however, loved as he loved, tenderly and intensely, and those who loved him most were those who lived most with him, Sheridan, Delany, Pope, and others."

It is no wonder that his spirit still seeks the sheltered stillness of the old haunts where he was beloved—he who longed so much for affection and human understanding—as when he railed most against tyranny and injustice and the ugliness and horror of life, he flew to Stella, craving her delicate love and gentleness as a passionate child a mother's sweetness !

There was a lurid mist rising up from the sea as I wandered through the grounds, under the old trees of so many memories, and by the tiny stream that still trickles round by the hedges. I began to ask myself in what mood I would find Swift, or would I find him at all. Would he be friendly or angry or sarcastic ? I almost hoped he would not speak if he would launch at me some scathing criticism of our time, of old Dublin at present groaning under the burthen of her tragedies, and I feared that sarcasm most of all.

As I entered the garden I heard the tramp, tramp, tramp of a heavy footstep, and I stood watching the heavy cloaked figure as he walked quickly round the path, tramping, tramping, tramping. I had heard that during his madness he had walked like this for ten and twelve hours at a time, and I feared I could never approach him. I stood quite near the boxed path as he drew by, but he went past several times, so close that I touched his cloak, but he did not see me. At last I decided to go

when he drew near again, and as I moved he suddenly turned sharply and asked me quickly :

“ Oh ! you are a member of the Swift Society, are you not ? ”

I did not know of the existence of such a society, and he answered for me.

“ You never heard of such a society ? Well, if it does not exist it should. Ireland is my Debtor,” and he laughed—such a small funny laugh, not at all what I had expected. All I had intended to say remained unsaid, and I stood looking at the questioning figure in silence. I seemed to wither up under that look, and with another funny little laugh he passed on, tramping, tramping, tramping.

I moved slowly away, still hypnotised by the sound of the footsteps, reaching the iron gate without looking back, and hearing it swing behind me. Out in the courtyard the footsteps were still ringing in my ears, and as I came to the old gate lodge I turned to look at the spot where the Dean used to leave his horse on arriving from the city. As I did so I heard the footsteps approach quickly from behind. I stopped suddenly, and felt a hand on my shoulder.

“ My child,” said Swift quietly, “ once when I was Mad—or rather in one of my lucid moments—they took me for a drive in the Phoenix Park. I noticed they were putting up a new building, and I asked them what it was ? Dr. Kingsbury said to me : ‘ That, Mr. Dean, is the magazine for powder and arms for the security of the city.’ I laughed, and asked for a tablet. Let me take item of that ? My tablets, as Hamlet says, my tablets—memory put that down ! I wrote this. It was my last bit of writing.” He handed me the scroll.

.

As I found myself outside the gate, the Finglas tram was going towards the city. It stopped outside Delville, and I went on top, better to see the old House and the Botanic Gardens close by. In a few minutes we were passing through O’Connell Street, with its ruins on both sides, landmarks, too, of later history. I remembered the little scroll, and Swift’s words that they were the last lines he had written. I opened them and read :

Behold a proof of Irish Sense,
Here Irish wit is seen,
When nothing’s left that’s worth Defense
We build a Magazine.

Nelly Ptashkina.*

By CHRISTINE MAJOLIER.

ALTHOUGH it may be true to say that every child possesses the instinct for self-expression, it is as equally certain that few children enjoy at the same time the indispensable gift of a knowledge of literary form.

In England during the last few years there has been most regrettably a surfeit of juvenile literature—juvenile in the sense of the juvenility of the stage child who responds to an adult demand for entertainment, and has, therefore, little, if any, childish or natural spontaneity. Childish creativeness, as represented by Miss Daisy Ashford's works, demand recognition and amused appreciation. She transcribes life as she imagines it could be, and although from her work to that of Nelly Ptashkina is temperamentally a far cry, there is in both of them the same simplicity of purpose and single-mindedness of heart. But in this Russian child of fourteen there is the conscious desire to write for the sake of the beauty of the written word. Writing may be a spiritual diversion, yet, at the same time, it exacts from her a very real exercise of the intellect. She understands the necessity of clothing her sacred, most intimate thought in appropriate language. She says herself in the first entry of the present diary: "I should very much like this part of my diary to show my spiritual growth, to be different from what I have written before."

Presumably the earlier diary was, in her estimation, simply a childish record, a few immaterial entries of her daily life. This diary, begun at the age of ten, was left behind in Moscow when she, with her family, was forced to leave the town by the revolutionaries. She began to write again, after reading Marie Bashkirtseff, and, on her own admission, she wishes to emulate her. She reads enormously, Tolstoy, Tchekov, Turgeniev, Thiers, and even W. J. Locke. History impresses her with its incessant repetition of events. It gives her the courage, the impulse to write under abnormal circumstances. Imbued by its spirit and the teaching of the Russian Masters, she writes, and if Marie Bashkirtseff is the fountain head of her inspiration, she soon leaves her behind. The former's overwhelming, almost hysterical vanity compelled her to write to an audience, however imaginary, however remote. She did write for posterity, even if subconsciously, and although this anticipation in no way belittles the value of her literary reputation, it undoubtedly reduces the personal interest.

Whereas Nelly Ptashkina, wishing ardently to be a writer, to make for herself one day a name in literature, writes her diary merely as a record

* "The Diary of Nelly Ptashkina." Published by Jonathan Cape. 1923.

of her aspirations and emotions, pages to be jealously guarded from even her nearest relatives, and but for the fact that death unexpectedly and tragically claimed her, it is more than probable that it would have retained its original intention. This child escaped, if not the hardships and moral sufferings of the Russian Revolution, the fate of many children of her epoch, to take refuge in France, and to be killed accidentally at the foot of Mont Blanc on July 2nd, 1920, little more than six months after her flight from Russia. She was seventeen, and had passed her Baccalaureat examination but a few days earlier, and was, therefore, approaching her long-desired liberty of mind. Throughout her diary she longs for the moment when, childhood passed and the grind of examinations terminated, she could give herself wholly to her self-chosen career. Above all things she wished to become a writer; yet with the generosity of youth she also contemplated other careers, less egoistical, consciously more far-reaching. Her heart was given to the Russian people, and seeking ways to relieve their unhappiness, to give them back their self-respect, she contemplated the life of the social worker, the social organiser of school refuges for children, the student of law, the political personage, every career, in fact, that the intelligent and thinking child of her age usually does contemplate. Nothing is too vast, nothing is beyond her reach. Marriage plays its part, although there she is considerably divided between the comparative morality of marriage and free love. Logically she chooses free love. It represents her ideal of freedom. Yet, with all this youthful cocksureness, she admits, while she tacitly defends, her fundamental ignorance on such matters. She may be positive, yet far-seeing enough to feel that at twenty her intellectual education and increased intelligence will supplement or modify what at fifteen is her impulsive belief. She has, in fact, so much faith in the efficacy of the future that she confidently expects it to solve the problems of her much-exercised youth. Even Russia may have regained her sanity by then. France passed through just such a period, and behold! she is now the longed-for country of peace and liberty. Her profound sense of the historical helps her at the point where her imagination, put to such severe test in the uneasy era of Bolshevism, is failing her. Nothing is eternal, everything is transitional, even Bolshevism and the horrors of a Revolution. She says herself:

“To-morrow is the anniversary of the Revolution. . . . A year ago! How vividly I remember the unanimous feeling of gladness which seized all Russians at the first news of freedom. How exciting, how joyful it was. A year has passed. . . . How many changes! The Spring feast, when everything around seemed basking in the rays of the sun and steeped in radiance, has become a terrible drama. There are no illusions . . . gone are the fairy tales of spring . . . stern life has arisen before us. How harsh and forbidding it is. How old we have grown in this one year, which has held enough to fill ten. How much, how much everything has altered. Nevertheless, there have previously been epochs like ours, equally cruel and ruthless. . . . If we look at our time from an historical point of view, we shall not dwell on the

hopeless anarchy, on this picture full of gloom and despair from which there seems no escape, but only regard it as a process, far-reaching and grandiose it is true, in its magnitude and importance, but, all the same, representing only a single step in history."

Although few of these horrors actually touch her, she experiences the many material discomforts of the transition and, is not morally spared the knowledge of the terror she fortunately escapes. To this is added the despair of her dependence. She is helplessly caught in the toils of her youthful captivity. She can do nothing of herself. She cannot leave, she cannot remain, she is necessarily in subjection to her parents. All she can do is to keep her diary, to make of it a reflection of her moods, to impress every sentence with her personality. She cannot spiritually remain quiescent. The true Nelly lives therein. She may be victim of her youth, victim of her generation, she is never victim of her "ego." Nothing can suppress the fact of her separate existence, not even her death. She has got to live somehow or other, she must by some way or other provoke recognition of her individuality, for she believes implicitly that she is exceptional, and that time will prove her to be correct in her judgment. Is she not to make her mark on the world by her future career as either writer or philanthropic socialist? That she is exceptional no one will deny who reads this diary of a few years in her life, but that she herself knew exactly of what her dissimilarity consisted is open to doubt. Many children (in spite of an amiable conspiracy maintained by adults, to preserve their tranquil belief that children think of nothing in particular and certainly of nothing of importance) think and feel as she does. Children of her country went through what she did. Her family life, her national life, differed in nowise from so many others, but whereas they felt and suffered dumbly, she was able to translate every emotion, every mood, every shade of thought into words which are at times of such pure beauty and intellectual distinction, that in reading her diary, not only are you aware of the tragedy of one little Russian girl, but of the countless others who, living from day to day on the slender promise of hope, perished before dawn. There is nothing left of those who have gone mutely to their death but the words of this child, who is their sister in the spirit, yet by them do they live unforgettably. Nelly Ptashkina in immortalising them, has immortalised herself. She is the messenger of all children whose aspirations are destroyed, not alone by death, but even more inexorably by life. Had she to die that they might be remembered?



Barry Fitzgerald, Eileen Crowe, Arthur Shields, and Sara Algood in "The Glorious Uncertainty."

By BRINSLEY MacNAMARA.

Of Playwrights and Players.

By PIERROT.

THE production, under the auspices of the Dublin Drama League, of M. Henri Lenormand's *Le Temps est un Songe* in the Abbey Theatre, towards the middle of December, must be regarded as an event of considerable importance to the Dublin Theatre. For it is a characteristic play, and is typical of the direction in which the most serious of the younger French dramatists are tending. That direction, as we shall show, is directly opposite to the path along which Eugene O'Neill is gathering so much fame for himself in America at present.

Summarised, this is the story. Nico van Eyden, 35, comes back to his Dutch home from Java to marry Romee Cremers, who, just before she meets him again, imagines she sees him sinking in the lake belonging to the van Eyden estate. At first Nico is in a hurry to bring Romee back with him to the East Indies, but, bit by bit, the mists and stagnant canals of Holland, which he hates so much, exert their influence on him, and he stays on. A Buddhist priest in India tells him he can see the past and the future, the past and the future being co-existent with the present. Time is a garden. A man with a veil hides those flowers in the front, which are the future; another with a veil hides those flowers behind, which are the past. Time is a dream. Truth is only to be got beneath the waters of the van Eyden lake, which is like the eyes of Romee in that, though they are still, they hide a seething life. It was out of curiosity that, as a child, he had tried to hang himself. As he tells Romee this, she lets slip a hint as to the vision she saw of him struggling in the lake. He becomes estranged from Romee. Terrified, she plans with his sister Riemke to get him away to Rotterdam. An accident spoils her plan. Nico drowns himself in the lake, while his sweetheart is looking out at him from the sitting-room window in his home.

That is all.

It sounds thin enough, put thus baldly. As a matter of fact, it throbs with intense intellectual and emotional life right through, and the manner in which the gradual development of his sweetheart from being a care-free young girl to a beautiful spirit torn between the mysteries of love, of existence, of destiny; and shedding, in spite of her almost child-like youthfulness, a motherly protectiveness around her obsessed lover, is at once a tribute to the masterly dramatic technique of Lenormand, and the incomparable and fascinatingly subtle interpretation of Eileen Crowe. It was shown best when the two lovers are at the sofa by the fire, and Romee, by swift, almost monosyllabic interruptions in Nico's explanation (here the translation by Mr. Thomas McGreevy ran with

fine idiomatic swiftness), gets him to disclose the actual state of his mind. There is a future before this young actress : her versatility of presentation is positively uncanny ; though her submergence in her part is complete, her personality retains its grace and charm (compare with this, for example, the winning pathos of her interpretation as Mrs. Morrissey in *Birtheright*).*

The dramatic time is four months. The six scenes take place in the van Eyden sitting-room. Every incident, save those connected with two characters, Saidyah and Mrs. Beunke, the Malay servant and the house-keeper respectively, converge to a point.

Lenormand's purpose in introducing these two is to provide an effective contrast to the central character. Saidyah (M. J. Dolan) represents that fatalism of the East which accepts what destiny gives, and makes the best of a bad matter ("if truth is in the lake, give me illusion"), while Mrs. Beunke is that utterly exasperating person who is for ever querulously whining about the little things that are of no possible consequence. In the very moment of his tragic terror at the nothingness of life, at the top of the climax, the poor creature produces her account book. She can't make it balance. Give it here ! Seven and three are nine. Oh ! Mr. Nico ! Seven and three are not nine. Prove it, then. No, Mrs. Beunke—Mr. F. J. McCormick's restrained fury here was very fine—you would rather have your 995 grammes of brain than sawdust, and he goes out, by the hall-door, to his new bedroom, which is the lake.

On the program it was written that the influence of Ibsen is strongly marked in the play. "But where the Ibsen problem is ethical, Lenormand's is metaphysical."

This is true and not true.

When in the seventies Ibsen inaugurated his sociological plays with the *Pillars of Society*, they had to underline the ethical aspect, for sociology is a branch of ethics. But the central fact about the masterpieces of the great Norwegian is that they dealt with problems. Mere physical incident, on the one hand, and mere psychological phenomena, on the other, were relegated to an inferior plane. Ibsen did not tell a dramatic story. He glossed it. Now, Eugene O'Neill has canted overboard all this ethical exegesis, just as M. Lenormand has. He is satisfied to trail the physical footprints of Captain Keeney in *Ile*. They lead to a tragedy of insanity. In the same way Lenormand does not bother us with the *ought* and the *should* of the sociologists. He tracks the footprints of a mind through an ontological morass, and, like O'Neill, his trail ends in tragedy, a tragedy of insanity, too. It is the dramatic, not the ethic, quality of the picture that absorbs him. Therein is its high artistic value.

The playlet, *Everybody's Husband*, by Gilbert Cannan, put on after *Le Temps est un Songe*, would, by its incredible dullness and drivelling stupidity, have bored a second-class scullery-maid had she come across it ten years ago in a threepenny novelette.

* Abbey Theatre, December 11th, 1923.

In his latest book,* in a passage reproduced from *Samhain*—the book brings together in a beautiful format the articles in *Samhain* and the *Arrow*, the letter to Lady Gregory that ran in *The Irish Statesman*, the Four Plays for Dancers, and *Countess Cathleen* and *The Land of Heart's Desire*—Senator Yeats says, in that marvellous, living prose style of his, what we have just been pointing out in Lenormand's and O'Neill's approach to their art: "A farce and a tragedy are alike in this, that they are a moment of intense life. An action is taken out of all other actions: it is reduced to its simplest form, or at any rate to as simple a form as it can be brought to without our losing our sense of its place in the world. The characters that are involved in it are freed from everything that is not a part of that action." Both Lenormand and O'Neill symbolise, that is, they idealise, universalise, as Aristotle would have said, though the ignoramuses twist these words so as to demand from artists mere classes, goody-goodies and liveried patriots. It has all been put into wonderful words by Yeats: the great artist's figure "is typical, not because he ever existed, but because he has made us know of something in our own minds we had never known of had he never been imagined." When propagandists say that a writer should make typical characters, "they mean personifications of averages." Here is a summary of the purpose of tragedy: "If we were not certain of law we would not feel the struggle, the drama, but the subject of art is not law, which is a kind of death, but the praise of life, and it has no commandments that are not positive." As a master in aesthetics, particularly dramatic aesthetics, I do not know whether Yeats is not the greatest of living writers.

The exotic and intimate symbolism of the plays for dancers as they are directed to be shown (in a drawingroom) accords with the theory put forward in the letter to Lady Gregory, and such slow ceremony, almost ritual, would, I think, have better suited Mr. Hardy's play† than an open-air production by mummers, as at Dorchester. The production was pretty generally described as thin and inclined to be tiresome. The strange beauty of Hardy's style would have got its full effect had the play been handled as Mr. Yeats's plays were by Mr. Rummell and Mr. Dulac.

Hardy is like Yeats in his power of clothing a dramatic situation in words of "shining beauty"—indeed, Yeats takes Ibsen to task for his lack of this quality. Unfairly so, I think, for Ibsen never wrote for an esoteric audience of hierophants who could be fitted into a drawing-room, and in this regard we are on the side of Ibsen and the bad angels. To a lesser degree, perhaps, for he is more exercised by the dramatic situation of the Sidonian queen than by its symbolic interpretation, the same beauty of phrase is noticeable in Mr. Masfield's most recently published play,‡ which was performed last May by the Hill Players in the Oxford Playhouse.

* *Plays and Controversies*. By W. B. Yeats. Macmillan. 10s. 6d. net.

† *The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall at Tintagel in Lyonesse*. Hardy. Macmillan. 6s. net.

‡ *A King's Daughter*. By John Masfield. Heinemann. 6s. net.

The biblical narrative is considerably crushed under the exigencies of classic technique, but not so as to quench the spirit of the story. Its originality is in its treatment of Jezebel and Ahab, who are pictured as broad-minded and modern both in their attitude to the gods and to the problems of their *realpolitik*. Jehu and the Samaritan prophets are shown as bloody-minded, selfish, antiquated intriguers. The death of the queen is full of poignancy—she is thinking of her lovers at Sidon, Kittim, Mura, as she does herself up to meet her death—full of beauty. All through the lyrical note is present, particularly in the songs, about the fate of Helen of Troy, which is made to be a commentary on the fate of Jezebel, sung by the girls Roseflower and Moonflower. The atmosphere of antiquity is admirably captured.

This is not true of the *Pilate** of Mr. F. C. Palmer, where you now and then meet the absurd *an* meaning *if* cheek by jowl with a statement like: "A dream is a faint subconscious vision." The play is overburdened by the number of characters who flit upon the stage only to disappear, and there is no meat in the story.

Mr. Halcott Glover's new play,† which, to the eternal disgrace of London, failed last month when it was put on in the Everyman Theatre, Hampstead, is a powerful study of a man's insane revulsion against Life, or at least against the revolting manner in which Life is generated in the human species, and thus, it will be seen, belongs to the school of Eugene O'Neill. The central figure, the sea-captain Hatteras, is a true tragic figure; his protagonist, for the other *dramatis personae* are altogether subordinate, is Life itself, which gets her own back on him in a way that would have appealed to Blanco Posnet.

As a splendidly complete work of reference for the dramatic work and the stage conditions of the forty years of the Restoration, Mr. Allardyce Nicoll's work‡ looks like being the last word. That is not to say that in its exhaustive account of the seventeenth century playwrights it leaves untouched a study of tendencies and of social and other reactions upon the stage. Quite the contrary; the varied elements that went to the making of the Stuart theatre are pursued with scholarly care and the acutest, critical penetration. Dryden has been placed, once for all, in his due position in this development. Especially is the author's searching analysis of the "immorality" of these players notable. The appendices, containing much hitherto unpublished matter, unpublished at any rate in book form, is of the very greatest value. It is, indeed, a *magnum opus*.

* *Pilate*. By F. C. Palmer. E. J. Burrow and C. 6s. net.

† *The Second Round*. By Halcott Glover. Routledge. 2s. 6d. net.

‡ *A History of Restoration Drama*. By Allardyce Nicoll. Cambridge University Press. 16s. net.



RELIQUARY—"The coming of the Da Danaan Gods to Ireland," from "Celtic Wonder Tales," by Ella Young.

RING—"Progress," executed for Mrs. George Bernard Shaw.

RING—"Reincarnation," on lines from "A Song of the Sea." (Old Irish.)

MORSE—For the Right Rev. Monsignor John Rogers, San Francisco.

BROOCH AND RING—"The National Being," by "Æ," for Edw. Melland, Esq.

BROOCH—"Inspiration," on lines by W. B. Yeats.

BROOCH—Symbolic, for Mrs. Edw. Glanville.

RELIQUARY—"Schkhet," for Miss Ella Young.

RELIQUARY—"Inisfail," on the poem by Ella Young.

An Artist in Metal.

AS I step into Mia Cranwill's workshop I wonder what kind of a place Benvenuto Cellini arranged for himself in that chateau the good King Francis gave him. He had not so fine a collection of tools, I warrant, and if ever he wanted gold wire drawn to a hair-like thinness, his apprentices had to make shift with something less than the machine that bulks here so proudly—and as for enamelling furnaces! Well, perhaps Benvenuto did not want to enamel.

When I look at the work, however, and at the designs pinned so casually on the whitewashed walls, I forget Benvenuto—I am reminded of the workers who had to stop for matins and nones and tierce, Irish monks lifting their heads from illuminated script, or setting aside a crucible. That strange Christ with the subtle beautiful face and the heavy symbolic crown might have been some monk's vision: that chalice might have shown itself against a beam of light. It was just such work, so fine, so subtle, so naïve at times, that these old craftsmen put through their hands. Here is a ring with a web of silver, spread upon gold, fine as a cobweb. This silver represents the Mantle of Dana, for the ring is a symbolic one. It is wrought in honour of the Four Sacred Jewels which the Folk of the Gods of Dana brought into Ireland out of the Four Magic Cities of their Heaven-World. In delicate panels of gold and silver, enriched with enamels, the Four Jewels are here! And behind the Mantle of Dana, set with a noble amethyst from the mines at Kim in Achill, there is cunningly wrought a small treasure-chamber for some precious thing. Inside the ring runs the inscription

“Let the wave break, let the star rise, let the flame leap.
Ours, if our hearts are wise,
To take and keep.”

Here is a ring and a brooch wrought to the inspiration of A.E.'s “National Being.” It is designed to express the idea, taken from the book, that actual forces are drawn from the Divine by the solidarity of a Nation. The thick gold twist represents the force of Nationhood reaching up through manifold individualities to the Divine, represented by the symbol of Solar Energy. The artist has used gold of two colours and the richest of blues and greens in enamel to complete a colour scheme at once symbolic and rich in beauty. A very beautiful ring, rich in colour and of the most delicate and intricate workmanship has symbols of various countries and ancient civilisations to illustrate the idea of re-incarnation. The motto graved within was supplied by A.E., and is taken from “A Song of the Sea” (Kuno Meyer's translation):

“When the wind sets from the west, across the salt sea of swift currents,
It desires to go past us eastward towards the Sun-Tree.”

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Another ring has been wrought upon Innisfail :

" O Rose, dark Rose, when wilt thou blossom red ? "
" I blossom now a splendour for the Dead."

" Proud Rose, when will our shame be turned away ? "
" Lo, in the East the whiteness of the Day."

" Rose, art thou pale or red for pride or shame ? "
" I am the Pure Perpetual Ashless Flame."

The Rose, a most minute and delicate tracery in gold, has blossomed to a ruby ; the Ashless Flame sits proudly in the front, a flawless crystal in a symbolic setting, and a little sanctuary has been contrived on either side of it.

At the desire of Mrs. George Bernard Shaw the ring made for her was fashioned on the lines by A.E. :

" In that wild orchid that your feet
 At their next falling shall destroy,
 Minute and passionate and sweet
 The Mighty Master holds his joy.

 Though the crushed jewels droop and fade,
 The Artist's labours will not cease,
 And from the ruins shall be made
 Some yet more lovely masterpiece."

Mia Cranwill illustrated this idea by a series of symbol and ornament starting from the Bronze Age and proceeding to greater intricacy through pre-Christian and Christian periods. Thus the first panel has the symbol of Solar Energy and the interlaced triangles of Deity and Humanity (or Life-Force with materials). The succeeding panels illustrate the manifestation and evolution of that Force. The motto which runs inside the ring consists of Masfield's lines :—

" God moving darkly in men's brains,
 Using their passions as His tool,
 Brings Freedom with the tyrant's chains
 And Wisdom with the fool."

A brooch well-dowered with enamel and enriched with delicate and elaborate traceries in gold and silver is entitled " Inspiration," and the idea set forth in it is so subtle and elaborate that I must use Mia Cranwill's own words in explanation :

" The idea is that the thing of paramount importance in any artist's work is individuality, which is, in this sense, direct—Inspiration put out in tangible form for others to see and profit by ; to help others in their self-expression, but not to be copied : that is for fools alone or slaves. The poet muses on the ways of the fools, and finally decides that the God-given Inspiration which he has won by his efforts is his alone, though his ' coat ' may be imitated, *that* cannot be reached by the fools, and, therefore, in that field is enterprise and the adventure of a pioneer.

"The 'coat' covered with traditional embroideries is symbolised by the shape of the brooch and the bosses of enamel ; these are adapted from a portion of the ornament on the traditional Irish Chalice of Ardagh. The imitation of the vulgar, or fools, is typified by the two outer pendants ; the chain is a machine-made variety, and the medallions are moulded on back and front from a die, not wrought as is the brooch. Below is the Divine triangle of Inspiration, wherein can adventure only those who have the Divine spark of genius—unmolested by the fools."

The lines illustrated are those of Mr. W. B. Yeats :

"I made my song a coat
Covered with embroideries
Out of old mythologies
From heel to throat ;
But the fools caught it,
Wove it in the world's eye
As though they'd wrought it :
Song ! let them take it
For there's more enterprise
In walking naked."

It is impossible to give an adequate idea of the delicacy and boldness of Mia Cranwill's work or of the subtle and rich colour effects which she obtains—each ring has a colour individuality. The morse wrought for Monsignor Rogers is a rich and delicate harmony in gold, silver, and platinum. By employing gold of different colours, and utilising every depth of shadow and height of light, she has fashioned a marvel of colour to match the marvel of the work—of that work experts have already spoken, for the morse has been exhibited in the art centres of two countries. It is designed to clasp a gold-tissued heavily-broidered cope wrought by the Dun Emer Guild.

I glance again at the walls as I go out. There is a design for a monstrance, a marvel of colour, noble lines, and intricate symbolism ; there is a design for a processional cross—but enough has been said ! It is time to be gone, and a fitting occasion on which to remember that one has Gaelic enough to say :

"Dáil ó 'Día an obair."

ELLA YOUNG.

Mia Cranwill.—An Appreciation.

THE majority of people who visit museums more often than not leave without any real understanding of the work of the old craftsmen, because they see "specimens" in glass-cases rather than human souls worked into material.

To fully appreciate beautiful workmanship of any kind, of any period, it is not enough to enjoy the appearance of the thing created as it stands detached from its original purpose, place, and time.

To enjoy such things it is necessary to emerge from oneself, from the immediate environment of the moment, and to visualise the master-makers in theirs, the person for whom made, costume of the period, social conditions, and so forth. Then, and then only, can we hope for a more intimate understanding of what is before us—for Imagination is freed.

The best attainments of our good present-day craftsmen have been achieved by walking wisely through the past, noting as they went, and relating all to the best contemporary Art and Literature.

Of such is the work of Mia Cranwill, who combines yesterday with to-day to a remarkable degree, interpreting the very life essence of the old and wonderful forms of Celtic Art, proving their right to continuity. But she also endows her jewels with the romance of Irish literature of her own time.

Taking as her theme the inspired writings of such intellects as A.E., Yeats, and, especially Ella Young, she constructs a beautiful thing in which to enshrine the Idea in precious and permanent material, adding Beauty to Beauty.

Her work is not only inspired, poetical, and traditional, but of excellent technique—a combination often dreamed of but by no means often realised in these days of haste (and one might hope), repentance.

F. NEWLAND SMITH, A.R.C.A. (Lond.)
(*Teacher of Goldsmiths' Work and Silversmiths' Work,
Manchester School of Art*).

A Neolithic Egotist.

I HAD been reading Mr. Kipling's *Primum Tempus* before falling asleep, and now I saw him in the guise of a sculptor in his workshop, engaged in the creation of that wild poetry-man, who is its hero.

Absorbed with interest in the work, I sat down upon a block of unfashioned ideas, amidst the fragments and detritus of those that were coming to birth, but, yielding to desultory reflections, soon passed into a nebulous reverie about that wild man and his ways.

He lived and sang the glories of his tribe in the early part of the neolithic age ; but though he was apparently the official poet of his people, I must not describe him as poet-laureate—that would be a harsh and degrading anachronism.

At that period, dominion even in the realm of poesy was to be had only at the price of eternal vigilance ; eminence was attained not more by skill in rhapsodizing, than in performing, heroic deeds, for as a head-poet's magic was effectual to soothe the savage breast of the average tribesman, so it irritated and enraged his brother poets, inebriating them with desire to destroy what they could not excel. The consummation of such desires, in addition to being intrinsically gratifying, had the consequential advantage of creating a vacancy in the chair of poetry.

The filling of that would, of course, be quite a separate day's work, but the vista was always pleasant, even if ending in a *cul-de-sac* so far as any particular poet was concerned, as he would have had his chance—which was better than being up against a dead wall all the time.

Now, with regard to the poet's insignia. The bay or laurel did not come into use for quite a long time. Its symbolism and allusion would have been too much for those hard-pated warriors, even if someone could have pierced futurity and told them all about Daphne and Apollo. They would have set the floor—mahogany not being then in use—on a roar : they would have laughed to split the welkin at the idea of encircling a man's head with foliage in order to signalize his importance.

In later ages, crowns and decorations were usually bestowed upon the honoured one by another hand, whereas in that of which we speak he was self-crowned. The coronation took place generally after, but sometimes during, the feast, which was the final demonstration of his *de facto* right to supremacy. The victorious poet always selected the decorations himself, and they were invariably simple and of direct appeal—a garland of the former poet's teeth, a collar of knuckle-bones, with a few of his toe-nails curled, or similar *personalia*. Such articles gave the imagination something immediate to go upon, tangibly suggesting the nature of the difficulties which he had overcome, and clearly pointing to the wearer as the winner. True, the difficulties were indicated rather

than shown, but the entireties could be readily estimated by the curious on *ex ungue leonem* principles. So, why drag in Daphne?

But to return to our hero. It appears that rival poetry men informed the chiefs that his style was not all that style might be, or, at all events, become in competent hands—this brought about a palpable lack of enthusiasm whenever he took the floor.

He was not slow to observe the fact, and jumped, being a wild man, swiftly to conclusions—with the intriguing bards, and in the result was able to add a few interesting kickshaws to his scant adornment, and to compose a new pæan.

He rejoiced exceedingly in the overthrow of his rivals, saying, with ironic sneer, it was better they had died in combat than of a broken spirit, for his method was inimitable, his way the only way: they were spared the gnawing consciousness of inferiority, the torturing hope which is the sole possession of the vanquished. Such were his vapourings, such his overweening pride in himself and his art!

Now the gods looked upon him from on high with what in terrestrial beings would be a mixture of contempt, amusement, and pity; but pity is an insidious element, and it infected the whole emotional mass, so much as to impel one of the gods to descend to the poetry-man during the watches of the night.

Without introduction or preface, he wakened him by a thunderous roar (such as gods used in that age), and stated that there were no less than sixty-nine methods by which tribal lays might be articulated; adding, moreover, as he wagged an indoctrinatory finger at the terrified poet—and this was the pungent part of the message—that “every single one of them was right.” The god uttered the last clause with horrid and punctilious emphasis—in italics, as it were, with a dash between each word, so as to drive home the disconcerting proposition, point by point.

The poor poetry-man did not sleep much more that night, for those winged words were as barbed darts; the italics had seared, the dashes had entered his soul, and he struggled humanly against the bitter cure of his cherished misconceptions.

Next day his appearance was so haggard and distracted that he had to satisfy many curious questioners as to the cause, and he injudiciously told them the whole truth of the matter.

While ostensibly desirous of acting in conformity with the live-and-let-live implication in the message from Headquarters, he did not take kindly to the new regulations. He remained unrepentant at heart, secretly glad that he had previously eliminated some of the more important causes to which the innovation was due; for as the sixty-nine modes were to him only so many ways of improving his position and prestige, he was naturally anxious that outsiders should not be allowed to compete.

But that freedom from interference which he had acted so ruthlessly to attain brought its appropriate punishment, for he discovered after a time that it was impracticable to maintain his status merely by physical

tours de force, without incurring the suspicion that he desired a monopoly which he was not prepared poetically to justify—especially since the promulgation of the sixty-nine possibilities, which he had so unwisely divulged.

He was tortured to distraction by the embarrassing profusion of riches disclosed to him by the god, and which he had perforce to employ or abandon to others : he was never done with metrical experiments and the inventing of new themes and schemes to keep all the sixty-nine ways and their combinations and permutations occupied ; for his rivals were ever on the alert, ready to pounce on any that he did not happen to be using at the time.

The strain was too severe, and he became affected in mind. For a while the tribesmen thought it was only a passing phase, a heightened degree of that normal furor to which they were accustomed. Alas ! no, the malady was permanent, and the poet, in his delirium, imagined himself one enormous eye with sixty-nine facets facing in sixty-nine different directions, perpetually gyrating on its axis and whirling with terrific velocity round sixty-nine separate orbits, through the vault of heaven, the facets indiscernibly merged in one sphere of dazzling white against the eternal blue.

The higher intelligence of the chiefs appreciated his strange ideas as some kind of psychic allegory, while that of the people did not penetrate beyond the surface of apparently obvious fact, but for one and the other reason he was doubly sacrosanct, and had no more occasion to trouble about his position and prestige.

At times on his ethereal rounds, when passing through orbits on the upper planes which almost seemed to touch the confines of the azure vault, he oft was fain to spring away, daring the mysteries beyond, in hope of finding some quiet region where, freed from the tyranny of the sixty-nine, he might be one, gyrating in one plane, on one axis, with one idea, in peace and perpetuity—but, no, some power ineluctable dragged him onward and away, held him to the road, now whirling him up the slopes of desire and into sight of the heights of achievement, only to hurl him over the zenith of the hated periphery he sought to escape, and down—down—

While his soul was whirled aloft in this manner, his body, declining with the years, was following the normal course ; and so he fared until he came to that place where all the ways of the world meet in one, and by that only way went he onward into the darkness, alone.

M. J. R.

Book Reviews

OISIN AFTER THE PARLIAMENTARIAN FENIANS. The Irish Revolution And How It Came About. By William O'Brien. Dublin : Maunsel and Roberts. 1923. Price 16s.

With all his faults Mr. William O'Brien is one of the greatest, as he is one of the most tragic, figures in the making of contemporary Ireland. His remarkable gifts of character and temperament made him the centrepiece of a great success and of a great failure. After his great and solid achievement in the Land Conference and the Land Act in 1902-3, the fruits of positive accomplishment eluded his grasp. He still influenced the course of affairs, but what he and his allies failed to achieve, because the task was too big for those who then essayed it, helped considerably in shaping later political development.

This new book, the last of a valuable trilogy, is Mr. O'Brien's personal contribution to the historical literature of the great years from 1910 until 1921. Where it is personal and intimate it has all the qualities that made his previous books as absorbing as any romance. There are not so many graphic pictures and charming passages, but there are many pages to stir the blood, much hard and heavy hitting, not a few shrewd judgments on men and events, and some revelations, important as they are piquant, disclosed with all the vigour and frankness that distinguished O'Brien as a good journalist and a sincere politician.

Naturally, the main theme is the frustration of his attempt to apply to the political problem of Anglo-Irish relations the policy of Conciliation, Conference, and Consent, which succeeded so well in establishing peasant proprietorship and killing landlordism by kindness. Death, however, cannot be made as easy for imperialism as for landlordism, and the All-for-Ireland League was not the instrument for that operation. Subsidiary to Mr. O'Brien's chief topic is his treatment of the Home Rule Bill of 1912, the World War, Sinn Fein, Easter Week, and the I.R.A., Conscription, and nearly everything that has happened since, except Partition, against which Mr. O'Brien has always taken a consistently firm stand. And so nearly every line that Mr. O'Brien writes is highly controversial and raises issues which cannot be discussed here. That in itself is no demerit in a book like this.

The book throws a good deal of light not only on events, but on the attitude of leading politicians, including the author himself. Most interesting and important are the chapters in which he prints for the first time his memoranda upon the Lloyd George proposal for an "Irish Provisional Government" after Easter Week, 1916, and in which the Convention of 1917 and the negotiations of 1921 come under his searchlight. There is, unfortunately, but too much evidence to confirm some of his most unpleasant conclusions, for even Homer nodded on occasion. There are moths, if not beams, in the eyes of more than Dillon and Devlin, Griffith and De Valera, and an outsider is driven to wonder whether, like others later, Mr. O'Brien would not have been wiser to resist the temptation to mediation to which he succumbed in July, 1919, before the Black and Tans had been loosed upon the country.

Some of Mr. O'Brien's omissions are as remarkable as anything he has included. They are, perhaps, explained by the aloofness of all the parliamentarians, without exception, from certain of the realities of the Ireland of the time. For all that, his book is a notable addition to our knowledge of the

recent past, and explains much that is obscure to all but those who have played a political hand, and even for them it has something fresh. Nobody interested in the Ireland of to-day, and nobody studying the history of the period, can afford to neglect it. A history of the Revolution it is not, a biography of Mr. O'Brien it is not; but as a source-book to quarry in it is indispensable. For historical and even biographical purposes it must be balanced by careful examination and comparison with other original sources. Mr. T. M. Healy, I suspect, could indicate and even supply some of those sources with precision. Standing by itself, "The Irish Revolution" is still of primary value, and it is not the least of Mr. O'Brien's services to his countrymen, although it sometimes hurts.

C. O'S.

THE TALBOT PRESS.

The output of the Talbot Press is increasing in volume, and the stream of literature is fed from many springs. A glance at the names of some of the volumes is sufficient to open up glimpses of very distant history: "The Tailteann Games," by T. H. Nally (1s. net); then, coming down the centuries, we have "The Early Irish Monastic Schools," by Professor Hugh Graham, of Winona, U.S.A. (5s. net), and many others of historical interest, and necessary to the proper education of Irish men and women. When you are wishful to plunge into the romance of Cuchulain, you will find Standish O'Grady's Cuchulain sagas, Dr. Hyde with ancient tales in his "Legends of Saints and Sinners," and, as well as Ferguson's Poems, including the Red Branch Stories and Congal, we have the later-published "Celtic Wonder Tales" of Ella Young, at once a delight and an inspiration to all who love the Old Ireland. Surely this is the charge laid on Young Ireland—to love and to learn all that it may of the ancient stories of gods and men, sung by bards for centuries, and then written down, coming down battered and scarred through the long night of our enchantment.

The Talbot Press has done most valuable work in publishing many works of this class, and, even so, has time, and uses the opportunity, to give to the public a wide range of the best modern fiction, from writers in Ireland, whose work grows in power and appeal.

Our readers should send for the complete list and select for themselves. The Talbot series of popular stories is equal in style of production to any books of the same class issued by firms over the water, and the prices range from 2s. to 3s. 6d. net. Notices of two of these appear in this number of the "Dublin Magazine," and readers may look for further reviews in future issues.

THE CHAIN OF GOLD. Standish O'Grady. Talbot Press, Dublin.
2s. 6d. net.

The Young Ireland of the Nineteen-thirties must be looked for among the boys and girls of to-day, many of whom run wild in the streets, with an occasional holiday pilgrimage to Gleann Dhu and the Cruagh fraoghan beds. Then they may live for an hour as roamers live, beside their own-built fire, beside a rocky mountain stream, under the roof of the pine-trees—what are left of them. Those lucky ones who have read "The Chain of Gold" may

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try to live over again some of the wonderful adventures of its two boy heroes, as far as may be in a glen, in place of a cave. But the free, camp-life spirit will be nourished, and initiative developed by these jaunts, and Young Ireland will be the better for the days so spent.

Over 300 pages of delightful story-telling are between the covers of this book, and those who have read it before will take no harm from a second perusal. (Learn how lobsters may be kept indefinitely at hand for the pot.)

In the list of other stories issued by the Talbot Press are many more equally popular stories, and all who have the privilege of the care of children's minds should send for a complete list, and see that the imagination of the future men of Erin is lit up with the character-forming fire of true romance.

THE HOUSE OF GLADNESS. Kay O'Kelly Talbot Press, Dublin.
6s. net.

Kay O'Kelly has succeeded, in these days of light-weight morals, in writing a novel that may be safely placed in the hands of any reader, young or old, and the working out of the plot is quite happy. "The House of Gladness" is one of the quietly-flowing streams of romance, whose banks are like the countryside, and no revolutionary theories of life, no gorgeously-raimented sins, no cynical epigrams have admittance. Spite of adversities, the hero and heroine pass by, smiling, arm-in-arm, as the stream flows out to the sea.

CHINESE POETS.—LI PO AND OTHERS.

THE WORKS OF LI PO. Trans. by Shigeoshi Obata. J. M. Dent and Sons.
10s. 6d. net.

THE LOST FLUTE AND OTHER CHINESE LYRICS. Trans. from the
French by Gertrude L. Joerissen. T. Fisher Unwin. 8s. 6d. net.

"Li Po, the 'Banished Angel,' that swaggering, swashbuckling, merry, melancholy Irishman of old China."

This inimitable description of one of China's greatest poets, if not the greatest, is by Kenneth Morris, author of "Golden Threads in the Tapestry of History," and a poet himself, and the thirteenth century portrait of the eighth century poet, which is a frontispiece, seems to suggest every bit of the description.

The following Chinese definition of Poetry, by an eighteenth century writer (for which I am indebted to Mr. Morris), is such a revelation of the Chinese attitude towards poetry, that I give it before quoting from the poets themselves:—

Beauty was born with the Heavens and the Earth. . . . All the phenomena of the world, when set in motion, bring forth sound, and every sound implies motion that caused it. The greatest of sounds are wind and thunder. . . . this is the natural or spontaneous voice of the heaven and earth, the voice caused by the movement of the great forces. So, too, in the purest mood of the human heart, when the fire of the intellect is at its highest, the Soul, if it be moved, will bring forth sound. Is it not a wondrous transformation, that out of this should be created literature? Poetry is the music of the soul in motion.

Here it is in Li Po's song ; hear him at the Cataract of Luh Shan :

O mountains of renown that I adore,
You fill my heart with deep repose.
No longer need I take the potion of precious stones,
You can wash away the earth-stains from my face.
Let me be with the things I love,
And leave the world of man for ever.

The translator points out that his aim has been, not so much to give a literal version of the poems, as to render the emotional colour ; a literal translation would often leave a Chinese poem unintelligible.

One of the favourite forms of Chinese poetry was that in which the words stop and the sense goes on, and this is seen in such verse as :

The dew is white upon the staircase of jewels,
And wets her silken shoes. The night is far gone,
She turns within, lets fall the crystal curtain,
And gazes up at the autumn moon, shining through.

And this, wherein the last line shall carry you down to the distant sea :

Why do I live among the green mountains ?
I laugh, and answer not, my soul is serene :
It dwells in another heaven and earth belonging to no man.
The peach trees are in flower, and the water flows on. . . .

Our poet lived at a period when the sun of the Tang dynasty, a very blaze of culture, was setting in the mists and clouds of luxury and dissipation. He was known as one of the Eight Immortals of the Wine-cup, whose fellowship was sung by Tu Fu, and of Li Po he tells :

As for Li Po, give him a jugful ;
He will write one hundred poems,
He drowns in the wine-shop
On a city street of Chang An ;
And though his Sovereign calls,
Will not board the imperial barge.
" Please, your Majesty," says he,
" I am a god of wine."

While he himself tells us :

Three cups open the grand door to bliss ;
Take a jugful, the Universe is yours.

With his great, tameless spirit, he was, in a sense, a focus of the extreme tendency downwards of his time ; he came of royal lineage, and erred royally when the mood was on him ; disappointment always led him to the wine-cup :

Woe to me, I turned to the pleasures of the world.
. . . I plodded on, a houseless exile—
All things went amiss.

One feels an immense wonder and heart-stirring at the illumination of soul shining out all through these 124 poems of the ninth century ; at the sweetness sensed in every number. Shigeoshi Obata, the Japanese translator, says they represent only a little over a tenth of the works preserved in the standard Chinese edition. " The Lost Flute," the second collection under review, quotes from the poems of over a score of bards, and they include a dancing girl, Court ladies, an eighth century Empress, and two Emperors, preserved right down through the centuries from 700 B.C. to poets of the nineteenth century. Here's ancient culture.

" The Lost Flute " is Toussaint's " La Flute de Jade " put into English for " the keen joy of working with thought and sentiment as ethereal as that

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of these Chinese poems," and pure delight it is to study them. Our friend, Li Po, is there, and many other Tang poets.

It would be hard to find a couplet more full of awe and immensity of reach than this, entitled "The Madman":

With great gestures he disappeared into the night.
He had the air of one gathering the stars.

We see those arms reaching out into furthest space as he vanishes out of sight. The greatness has not left China; this was written in 1879.

As a delicate contrast, a verse from Li Po:

That great flake of snow which has just floated over the lake was a white heron.
Motionless at the end of a sand-bank, the white heron watches the winter.

Eighth century Ouang-Tsi, one of the Li Po company, makes a poem out of directions for brewing a cup of tea, ending:

Lift the cup to your lips, then close your eyes. You will be in Paradise.

This collection also includes, surely, the shortest poem ever published:

In her window, a branch of a flowering peach tree.

Most refreshing, these two collections of a poetry almost unknown in this country. We realise that Eternal Beauty wanders wide and far on her eternal pilgrimage, and that the song of humanity is ever in the universal language of the heart.

ARTHUR KELLS.

THE WHITE STONE. By Anatole France. Translated by Charles E. Roche.
John Lane, The Bodley Head. Price 2s. 6d.

ON LIFE AND LETTERS. (First Series.) By Anatole France. Translated
by A. W. Evans. John Lane, The Bodley Head. Price 2s. 6d.

Messrs. John Lane, in their popular edition of the translated works of Anatole France, have performed the publishing miracle of sending forth masterpieces in a lowly yet fitting guise. The sign of the Bodley Head is an unfailing exorcism of all the horrors of cheerful tawdriness and nerve-racking ornamentation which are apt to haunt cheap editions even of the masters. The volumes are well and plainly bound in orange, and well printed. Haroun Al Raschid walks among the crowd simply clad in bright linen.

It is appropriate that Anatole France should be thus fortunate in all his phases of publication. He wears with like ease his crimson Florentine skull-cap of the Quattrocento and the cotton *bonnet rouge* of the revolutionary.

He is a writer who, having reached the simplicity of the highest aesthetic refinement, had felt himself burnt up by a compassionate sense of responsibility towards simple humanity. His entrance into the lists as the friend of the poor had about it the brotherly grace, the air of fiery generosity, spendthrift of intellectual championship, that only the true-born lords of literature can show.

The books before us are good examples of the particular rare qualities that this champion has for expenditure. These two volumes would do well enough to divide his shield as symbols of those two dominant aspects of his mind that may be glimpsed as the classical and the medieval sides of his Latin genius.

"*Sur la pierre blanche*," more exquisitely, perhaps, than any of his books, concentrates his feeling for Greek and Latin antiquity. The book is all sun-smitten marble, and fine amethyst shadows, white intellectual radiance, and sunrise ardour for beauty. Anatole France can raise up the classics body and soul. He is a Pygmalion whose statues all come to life because of the intensity of his passion for them. In the other volume, the first series of his articles in the *feuilleton* of the *Temps*, he says :

"As I understand it, and as you allow me to practise it, criticism is, like philosophy and history, a sort of romance designed for those who have sagacious and curious minds, and every romance is rightly taken, an autobiography. The good critic is he who relates the adventures of his own soul among masterpieces." Also he looks upon criticism as a comprehensive literary form giving opportunity for the display of "the rarest, the most manifold, and the most varied of intellectual faculties." "... It proceeds at once from philosophy and history. ... It replaces theology, and if we look for the universal doctor, the St. Thomas Aquinas of the nineteenth century, is it not of Sainte-Beuve that we must think?"

His interpretation of criticism, therefore, gives him scope in these articles for an autobiography in the manner he loves best—the manner of the "philosophical monk" who "belongs at heart to the Abbey of Thelema, where the rule is pleasant and the obedience is easy."

The duality of the English phrase "life and letters" does not satisfactorily express the unity of the French. The "*vie littéraire*" of Anatole France cannot be separated into component parts. Whether wearing the satyr mask of a Coignard or undisguised, Anatole France is never to be mistaken for a mere commentator on life and letters. He *lives* "*la vie littéraire*." He speaks to us of it from within.

Even were this not clear to us, we have his own confession :

"Those who read much are like hasheesh eaters. They live in a dream. The subtle poison which penetrates their brains renders them insensible to the real world, and throws them as a prey to terrible or to delightful phantoms. Books are the opium of the west."

If such be the case, the opium-eaters could choose no better prophet than the writer of these essays, to convince us that life in their phantom world is quite as vivid as life in the real one.

"Let us love books in the way that the lover described by the poet loved her pain. ... Let us love them, for we are dying because of them. Yes, books are killing us. Believe me when I tell you this, for I adore them, I long since gave myself unreservedly to them."

Perhaps this is a renunciation of the real world ; it is certainly an avowal of the vitality of emotion in the unreal.

Who does not feel in reading Anatole France that in the world of books he has lived and loved with all his heart?

We recognise him as a genuine traveller—no tourist or teller of hearsay, but one who not only knows intimately his phantom country, but has toiled, fought, and ruled there. His soul has indeed "adventured among masterpieces." He has about him the pride of the explorer. He bears the authentic scars gained in the defence of beauty and wisdom. His fine sword of irony, tempered in the sweet fires of compassion, is bright and worn with use. The tales told by such an adventurer have a reality that drives actuality billowing away from us in a confusion of ghostly vapours.

MICHAEL SCOT.

I FOR ONE. By J. B. Priestley. London : John Lane, The Bodley Head.

There is something restfully "old-fashioned" about these essays. We feel that the writer is a native of the nineteenth century journeying in the twentieth. He looks at the present age something in the way travellers look at places they have carefully read up in the guide books beforehand. Mr. Priestley seems to be quite prepared for modernity, but unfamiliar with it. Nor does he ever become naturalized. He walks warily like an alien who realizes only too well the dangers that lurk on every side of him. He deliberately turns up his Victorian coat collar to protect himself from the modern "torment of ideas," the modern "cult of the revolver," the modern "serious intellectual satirical novelists," "omniscient and uncharitable." He knows that nowadays "all is relative, shifting, confused, secretive," that "we grope from darkness to darkness, and are only the more bewildered by our brief intervals of light." He is painfully aware that the day when "none of the 'isms had yet arrived" is past and done with.

He wraps himself, therefore, in his own obsolescence. He behaves always in his own out-of-date fashion. He strolls about his city composedly as though speed and hustle were still besieging enemies instead of reigning tyrants. Avoiding vague principles and hard facts, he takes trouble to seek out and cherish the trivialities he observes being driven cruelly into the dark corners of life. He finds time to cultivate literary graces and a good heart. He finds time to be engagingly garrulous. He has leisure for "idle speculations," for "vain questions," for preoccupation with such unconsidered things as toy-balloons, haberdashers, and Mrs. Beeton's Cookery Book. He knows how to play pleasantly round some "odd but not altogether unfruitful theme," until the very proof-readers must, one feels, be beguiled into gentleness. Now and then he quietly drops behind the times altogether, to refresh himself with a glimpse of some old conjuror, or of the "older type of woman with her fancy-work and fancy puddings, her slight knowledge of Italian and painting in water colours," or of the older novelists who did not "spend their time trying to dazzle and bully the reader into admiration," or of "the old type of hypocrite."

Heartened by these, he returns again to wander through the maddening reality of modern London with a deliberation that changes it for him into an "insubstantial pagant."

As is natural, the scope of his perambulations is limited by the restrictions of his last-century garb of defence. He sets out with an agreeable grace of bearing, but he does not go far. He derides the shortness of his own explorations, but is either unable or unwilling to extend them. Frequently it is his own derision that cuts them short. He seems to be a victim rather than a seeker of anti climax. He continually "hurries away from the prophets," "anxious not to be late for tea," pointing out to us the while his own hurry and anxiety. He frequently draws back the curtains to look at the sky, but barks his shins against the window table, and, amused at his own mishap, retires to the kitchen for a culinary metaphor to cure his bruises.

The fact is that for the sake of a protective "cosiness" he has had to settle down to a prosaic outlook ; and when he tells us with a half-melancholy whimsicality that for him Dixie is a real Land of the Living, we feel a distinct tendency to take him seriously—as, perhaps, he would have us do. Against the doubts and uncertainties of the present, "so cold and brittle," he has made a refuge of "solid comforting stuff," and although he laughs at himself for so doing, and we know it for a joke, yet the fact remains that it is in this refuge we see him "sipping his cups of lethe-water and eating his hot-buttered lotus."

M. S.

THE END OF FIAMMETTA. By Rachel Annanda Taylor.
Grand Richards. 10s. 6d.

In her new volume of poems, Mrs. Taylor has given us a glimpse of those high and passionate and lovely ways of thought in which that amazing, intoxicating book, "Aspects of the Italian Renaissance," had its origin. Mrs. Taylor's first book of poems was published in the same year as "New Songs," and was, in its way, as important, as significant to the Scotland of its day as was the latter to the Ireland of those new singers. I remember well the delight with which we hailed the splendid and impassioned technique of such poems as *Flagellants* and many another lyric in that earliest book, and later the more stately cadences of *Rose and Vine* and *The Hours of Fiammetta*. And the hand that gave us these has in no wise lost its cunning. I know of no finer achievement in its kind than *The End of the Duel*, and I would that some of our too slovenly lyricists could profit by a study of that concentrated thought, that economy of expression in its closing lines :

"There's an end to the duel long fought in the dark
In the dangerous moonlighted Past.
Monseigneur, my God, a chivalrous lady
Surrenders at last.

Idly magnanimous, tolerant, intolerant
Of cowards, frank, fierce, Florentine,—
Monseigneur, my God, a chivalrous lady
Thou alone canst divine.

If I be defeated, 'tis by the inviolate
Stroke of Thy mystical lance.
Monseigneur, my God, a chivalrous lady
Still dares risk her chance.

If I be unvized, I gaze at my victor
With smiling and reconciled eyes.
Monseigneur, my God, play fair by the lady—
Unhelm ere she dies."

In outer form, as in content, the book is a worthy companion to the finest Renaissance study since John Addington Symonds.

S.

GOBLIN MARKET AND OTHER POEMS. By Christina Rossetti.
Blackie and Son. London.

The third number of Messrs. Blackie's Beautiful Poems series, illustrated and decorated by Florence Harrison. The artist drank from some Pre-Raphaelite spring as she worked, and some of the faces in the water-colour illustrations loom out, as from the days when the poems were written. Among these are "The Royal Princess," and the bride and bridegroom in "The Hour and the Ghost."

The black-and-white work is merrily goblin-ed where goblins are, while in "Fata Morgana" we sense the dance of the flight in the air, to the sunshine up the hill. "Where sunless rivers weep their waves into the deep" through the "twilight cold and lorn" of the sombre woods of dreamland, the artist is no less singing in the key, and the shadow of solitude lies everywhere. The book will charm the possessor.

A. K.

THOUGHT IN HISTORY.

It is curious to observe how the Hellenic spirit dominates, not only the art, but the very science and philosophy of the world, and to-day men like Einstein have adopted the attitude of the ancient Greeks to the physical universe—that is, if there is such a thing as the purely physical universe. In his latest book (*Freedom of the Mind in History*. 7s. 6d. Macmillan), Mr. Henry Osborn Taylor, maintaining the thesis that a study of the development of civilised thought shows man to have always possessed freedom of choice, of will, in fact, points out how true this is, first, of heroic Greece, and then of Christianity, which “struggled through a web of orientalised Hellenism.” The book goes back to the philosophical systems of Egypt, India, China, Israel, Greece, down to to-day, when scientists like Einstein are beginning to quest back, like Thales and Anaximander, “through the changing apparent to the underlying cause.” Relativity is not a modern theory, in this sense: “there can be no space apart from time, no time apart from space, no space and time apart from the passage of events.” The “continuum” of civilised thought in history is worked out with wonderful fairness and lucidity by Mr. Taylor.

How modern, too, do the discoveries in Luxor prove the ancient Egyptians to have been! This modernity is brought out with considerable vividness in Dr. Blackmann's recent book (*Luxor and its Temples*. By A. M. Blackmann, D.Litt. Illustrated by Major Benton Fletcher. 7s. 6d. A. and C. Black). The streets, the houses, the rooms, the habits, the religious ceremonies, the outstanding military events, live again in his text, which gets a strange vitality from the numerous quotations from Egyptian records, not the least interesting of these being the fine poems, some of them folk-poems, some of them coronation verses, as these to Rameses IV. There are twenty-four full-page plates, and fifty line drawings by Major Fletcher.

Voltaire might be regarded as a boundary-mark between the subjectivism of the older days and the almost ferocious objectivism of ours, an objectivism which is now being regulated, by thinkers like Henry Poincaré, with a due regard to the anthropomorphic tendency of the thinking faculty itself. Such a boundary-mark Lord Morley regarded him as anyway (*Voltaire*. By John Viscount Morley, O.M. 7s. 6d. net. Macmillan). Hear, for example, the vibrant eloquence of this: “The rays from Voltaire's burning and far-shining spirit no sooner struck upon the genius of the time, seated dark and dead like the black stone of Memnon's statue, than the clang of the breaking chord was heard through Europe, and men awoke in new day and more spacious air.” Or again, “Voltaire was the very eye of eighteenth-century illumination.” Or yet again, “Voltaire was a stupendous power . . . was ever in the front and centre of the fight.” With admirable frankness, no doubt, Lord Morley admits the ugly spots that spoil the picture of his hero: his vilification, so unlovely from a merely psychological standpoint, so hideous from a national one, of La Pucelle: his lies; his antic submissions to the Catholicity he had flung so many venomous darts at; the absurd sophistries of his childish *tu quoque* verbal dialectics, and so on.

Yet, for so finely penetrating an intellect as Lord Morley's to become fascinated by the achievement of Voltaire, there needs some explanation beyond that of his importance in the intellectual overthrow of the ancien régime. We think it lies in a certain inability which Lord Morley shares with the subject of his study. “With all his enthusiasm,” says Lord Morley, “for things noble and lofty, he missed the peculiar emotion of holiness.” Would it be

going too far to say that Lord Morley himself, icy *liberal* thinker as he was, not exactly "missed," but at least failed to appreciate the high philosophical importance of this holiness which he calls by the name of an emotion? This book on Voltaire was first published in 1872. Since then much attention has been devoted to various psychic states that in old days were relegated to an inferior position or plane in the investigation of beliefs. "Voltaire's strength," he says, "did not lie in speculation or systematic thought." But really ratiocination carries one a very little distance into that territory from which those who differ from Voltaire believe he was for the most part of his life effectively shut out. That Lord Morley shrewdly guessed his own disability, or perhaps even cultivated it unconsciously, his splendid sarcasm on Voltaire's stupid sneer at Dante and his fine tribute to Voltaire's great critic, de Maistre, do not persuade us to deny.

It is this grand sincerity and candour of investigating facts he does not like, this resolute refusal to burke a difficult side-issue, that, even more than his statesmanlike breadth and his vivid biographical skill, secure for Lord Morley his high consideration in the world of thought and letters.

PETER MCBRIEN.

A CONTRAST IN POETS.

Passion, expressing itself in warm beauty of phrase and compelling originality of metaphor, a lawlessness even, of which you get an anticipatory hint in the hand-painted, piratical face on the cover of this pseudo-broadsheet, a lawlessness joined to an exquisite feeling for lake and sea and sky and hill and those things wherewith the country, wild country for preference, is clad, a spreading vitality linked with real truth of poetic emotion; these are the qualities of the songs of F. R. Higgins (*Salt Air*. By F. R. Higgins, decorated by W. Victor Brown. Limited to 500 copies. 1s. 6d. The Irish Book Shop, Limited). The rhythm of his lyrics varies much, but these stanzas are fairly characteristic:—

She moves through her sheiling
Under the haws,
Her movements are softer
Than kitten's paws;
And shiny blackberries
Sweeten the rain,
Where I haunt her beaded
Window-pane.

I would she were heeding—]
Keeping my tryst—
That soft moon of amber
Blurred in the mist,
And rising the plovers
Where salleys fall,
Till slumbers come hushing
One and all.

With these glad, wantoning songs you could scarcely conceive a stronger contrast than the cold, intellectually beautiful, level-toned poems of Matthew Arnold recently reprinted (Poems by Matthew Arnold. With an Introduction by Alice Meynell. 2s. 6d. net. Blackie and Son). Her customary delicacy of discrimination is shown in Alice Meynell's foreword. "Not having,"

she says, "the English sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in his blood, Matthew Arnold is none the less a high English poet of his time. . . . Of many of the poets we love, we have nothing to say of their selection or their fastidiousness; but perhaps we may call him the master of the poets who choose."

P. McB.

MAX THE MAGNIFICENT.

Who approaches Max Beerbohm for cynicism without hardness, for truth without nastiness, for satire without brutality, for geniality without coarseness, for exuberance without artistic carelessness, for artistic finish without preciosity, in a word, for magnificence? For, is not to see weakness and pity it and smile with it, and even love it while emphasising it to be magnificent?

Max Beerbohm can be prodigiously irreverent. In one of these plates* we are shown the corpulent Albert Edward in a corner of a room with his face to the wall, and, sitting in a chair with a look of intense displeasure frozen into her heavy face, Victoria the Good. The caption—the captions are wriggling with humour—is: "The rare, the rather awful, visits of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, to Windsor Castle." That, no doubt, is prodigiously irreverent, as we have said; and yet will it be believed you can feel a real affection for the prince in the irresistibly comic caricature?

The best, if in such varied richnesses it is not foolish to speak of a best, are, we think, the overwhelmingly self-satisfied and well-cared-for E. V. Lucas, who yet does not succeed in hiding his urbanity and charm, and the deliciously impossible Lord Pentham of Lithway. The bitterest are Lord Lascelles inspecting the hat trimmed for him by Queen Mary, and Mr. Rudyard Kipling as the Absent-minded Beggar waiting for an inspiration.

Dodder on, dodder on, Max the Magnificent.

P. McB.

ENGLISH LITERATURE, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PROSE AND POETRY By Geraldine E. Hodgson, Litt.D. (Oxford: Blackwell. 6s.)

This book comes from Mr. Blackwell, and that being premised, it is superfluous to say that it is a handsome specimen of typography. Dr. Hodgson in her preface states that it is not intended as an outline history of English literature, but rather as a help to "those who do not know much or perhaps anything about it, or who may be thinking of it as a dull, horrid thing which they have to 'learn' in school, to see it as it is." There is no doubt that Dr. Hodgson makes smooth the way: she seems to mean the book for bright children "getting on," as we say: she has a suavity and lucidity and a gentle enthusiasm—except in a few places where her favourites take her off her feet—which at once commend the book to anyone who opens it.

In the chapter on the Epic a good deal of space is given to our early legends, and later on some of our present Irish writers come in for their meed of praise—Mr. Yeats' *Innisfree* is, of course, there amongst the Idylls, and "Another Irish Idyll, perhaps more beautiful still . . . is Seumas O'Sullivan's *The Sheep*," which is quoted in full, as is also the same poet's *The Path*, "Tremulous grey of the dusk," etc.

* Things Old and New. Max Beerbohm. 25s. Heinemann.

The book is amply illustrated by quotations, some from works rather off the beaten track; there are "tastes" of many things which are certain to make those for whom they are intended long for more. Dr. Hodgson says that she has "tried not to make a 'stuffy' book," in the phrase of a famous Cambridge classical scholar: she has gone to the other extreme and made it as fresh as the morning breeze in summer, and as sweet.

THE EARLY IRISH MONASTIC SCHOOLS. By Hugh Graham, M.A.
(Dublin: The Talbot Press. 5s.)

This book aims at giving a brief account of the Irish Monastic Schools prior to 900 A.D. It is evidently the result of wide and close reading; the author (who is Professor of Education in the College of St. Teresa, Winona, U.S.A.) is punctilious in giving the references for his statements and views, which is very satisfactory in a book of this kind. Another advantage is the bibliography at the end, but why did he not add an index? He finds that native learning was actively cultivated and developed before the introduction of Christianity; but however that may be, it did not come to very much. With Professor Bury and others he combats the popular idea that classical learning owed its introduction into Ireland to St. Patrick; Kuno Meyer contends that the seeds were sown in the early part of the fifth century by Gallic scholars who fled from France to escape the invasion of the barbarians. This, as Professor Graham says, would explain the excellence of the Latin and the acquaintance with Greek which was exhibited by Irish scholars on the Continent from the time of Columbanus onward. He discusses Irish monasticism and its system, giving lists of the most important schools here and on the Continent. The Irish schools in their heyday from the seventh to the ninth centuries attracted a number of foreigners, British, Welsh, Franks, even some from Egypt, and apparently a few Romans.

In dealing with methods of teaching the author rather naively says, "in teaching reading it was usual to begin with the alphabet," obviously such a sound principle that it has come to be the *invariable* rule. They had alphabet-cakes in that distant age, too—another of the discoveries of the ancients attributed to the moderns. "St. Columba's first alphabet was written or impressed upon a cake which he afterwards ate as he played by the side of a stream near his tutor's home." There is a full stop after that, so we are left in the dark as to whether the Saint devoured the cake purely from the irresistible desire which little boys have for these things, or in the innocent belief that the master might not have another at hand. We must leave that problem unsolved. Some of the masters were harsh, cunning fellows, as the next sentence shows: "Sometimes the alphabet was engraved upon a large stone." Imagine that for a child who had been brought up on edible alphabets!

In describing the libraries of Irish monasteries abroad, Professor Graham mentions amongst others that of St. Gall in Switzerland, which in the ninth century possessed 533 volumes, nine of them being palimpsests. "The Fathers," he relates, "who attended the Council of Constance depended mainly for reference on the valuable mss. in this library, to which they had free access; and, sad to relate, when the Council broke up in 1418 A.D., many of these holy men neglected to return these valuable old theological works in Latin and Greek." Probably they found these valuable works of reference "indispensable," as advertisers say.

Further on we read that, according to Traube, anyone in the time of Charles the Bald who knew Greek was either an Irishman or had learned it from an Irishman, and it appears that when Pope Paul sent King Pippin a copy of Dionysius the Areopagite it was all Greek to the King, and no one could make head or tail of it till Johannes Scottus Eriugena came along years afterwards.

This book does not dig too deep; the author very modestly deprecates any such claim and the facts far outweigh the discussion; but, notwithstanding these things, it is a worthy book, and contains material drawn (and co-ordinated) from many scattered and fragmentary sources, and presents them in a connected way which is at least suggestive and may well be considered a plan on which quite an ambitious structure might be built.

ALGERIA TO-DAY. By Lt.-Col. G. Casserly, F.R.G.S. (T. Werner Laurie, Ltd. 16s.)

It's a long, long way to Timbuctoo, but one hardly feels the journey with that *comes jucundus*, Col. Casserly. He gives a graphic account of the heterogeneous tribes of Algeria, the Sahara, and round about; he has much admiration for the work of the French there during the last ten years—railway building, laying out roads, and the general development of the country under their direction and stimulation. Apparently they well deserve the praise. Algeria, though it has certain drawbacks where travellers are concerned, does not seem to be exactly the last place in the world: there is plenty of scenery if you go to the right spots; even the Sahara is not an arid trackless waste, and camels' bones are not the only objects of interest.

It is astonishing how those Algerine pirates defied and batted on the rest of the world for so long, admitting that effective action was prevented by international jealousies. "The Algerine navy began only with a few ships, and never rivalled in strength that of even a fourth-rate European power; yet for centuries it ruled the seas, devastated the shores of Christian lands as far away as Ireland and Iceland, and extorted tribute from almost every maritime nation. It is the almost incredible fact that Holland, Portugal, Naples, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and later the United States of America, paid an annual tribute. . . . France, England, Spain, Sardinia, Hanover, Tuscany, Ragusa, and Venice gave presents instead of tribute, while Hamburg and Bremen sent naval munitions and material of war. In addition, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark were obliged to furnish arms, ropes, masts, spearheads, powder and lead." Naturally they did a fine business—"Between 1613 and 1621 they captured 447 Dutch, 193 French, 56 German, 60 English, and 120 Spanish ships, to say nothing of what they sunk or burned at sea or sold in foreign countries to avoid paying the Pasha his dues of one-fifth."

From Batna one can get to two ruined Roman cities which are said to rival Herculaneum and Pompeii—Lambessa, the ancient Lambaesis, "where the third Augustan legion had its headquarters, and where the ruins of temples, triumphal arches, theatres, baths, forums, and the columned Prætorium tell of the glories of this far-flung outpost of Imperial rule. But they faded into insignificance compared with the remains of Timgad, sixteen or seventeen miles farther on. Thamugadi the Romans called it. . . ."

It is interesting to read of a terrific hail-storm in July one hundred and fifty miles inside the Sahara: we thought the thing simply wasn't done. The hailstones were no joke—"sharp-edged bars of ice two or three inches long

... they pierced the tarpaulin cover of the diligence as if they had been bullets ; they battered and bruised the driver's arms, hands and body until he was forced to pull up and wait for a couple of hours."

There is a place out there called Tlemcen, perched on a rock 2,500 feet above the sea, "the city of Algeria richest in treasures of the days of Arab supremacy . . . when Henry the Eighth lived it was a flourishing city of over 125,000, its civilization at its zenith, the arts cultivated, saints and scholars filling its mosques, its commerce extending to the Levant." A Sultan named Abou Yakoub laid siege to it once upon a time, but it proved such a tough proposition that he built another city on another high rock just opposite, so as to do the thing with ease and dignity ; it had a "noble palace with marble courts, shady gardens, and luxurious chambers for the beauties who filled his harem. . . . There were Moorish baths to refresh the tired warriors." In order to keep an eye on the other fellows, Abou erected a wall nearly forty feet high with towers a hundred and twenty feet, and it stands there still, though Abou's city has vanished. Tlemcen survived it all anyway : "the dog it was that died."

Col. Casserly says that nowhere more than in Northern Africa are found the Moslem religious confraternities that aim at making the Faith a priest-ridden one, and among them fanaticism and antipathy to Christian nations are quickly bred. Among all who profess it Mahommedanism is a bond of union often stronger than feelings of nationality. What affects the Moslems in Turkey or Syria may inflame those in India or Morocco. Many of these confraternities are really secret societies spread over many countries and acting as channels of communication between followers of the Prophet in these lands, so they may be powerful influences politically where Moslems are ruled by Christians, and must be reckoned with accordingly by the Governments. The author considers this a serious matter for France in Algeria, especially as the other races there have an immensely higher birth-rate than the Europeans, who are also in the minority.

The book contains a great amount of information about these peoples and their strange customs pleasantly conveyed, and it is adequately illustrated.

A SHORT HISTORY OF FRENCH LITERATURE, FROM THE BEGINNINGS TO 1900. By T. B. Rudmose-Brown, M.A. The Educational Company of Ireland. 3s. 6d.

This very able book is in a sense an analysis, a trenchant analysis, of French literature rather than a history. It is eclectic, but the eclecticism is that of a poetic mind with a feeling for form more than matter ; and though at first sight form seems to transcend matter, is it not, pursued to its *ultima Thule*, matter *in excelsis* ?

Professor Rudmose-Brown really sets out to prove a thesis, that the French writer is an artist ; at bottom, stressing intellect rather than emotion ; "in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever" in the pursuit of ideal form ; seeking truth whatever the result be ; spiritual in the larger sense ; loving Art for herself, "as she is, not for himself in her."

The author does not confine himself to consideration of merely literary effort : he illustrates the tendencies of the periods he deals with, the general sweep, by analyses of contemporary movements in the sister arts—obviously a most excellent idea.

The breadth of learning displayed—or we should rather say, slurred over in the book is marvellous : it is so comprehensive and exact, and on occasion so surprisingly minute. The author at times strides along, as it were, tearing up, if need be, stout saplings that stand in his way ; at times he moves with leisured pace through “winding mossy ways” ; now conveying panoramas with a gesture, and now culling for our delight some tiny bloom, neglected by all but diviner eyes.

We cannot help expressing regret that the form in which this book is got out should be so unworthy of its matter : it is more in the style of a one-and-sixpenny school primer than anything else we can think of.

OLD GLASS AND HOW TO COLLECT IT. By J. Sydney Lewis.
(T. Werner Laurie, Ltd. 18s.)

This admirable compendium is written with the spontaneity and ease of one who has knowledge to burn. Whatever Mr. Lewis says you see he could have said a great deal more ; he exudes with knowledge of his subject ; it is never obtruded ; he has such a pleasant way with him, his quiet, level tone is so convincing, that if he told us the stars were only “Bristol diamonds” we would believe it.

The book has over 60 illustrations, and the reproduction is excellent. In a chatty introduction the history of glass-making is traced from obscure antiquity ; after this comes Early English glass, and after that we get to surer ground with Eighteenth-century glass in all its varieties, including, of course, Bristol and Nailsea, and a whole long chapter on our own, with the history and varieties of which Mr. Lewis is quite at home : he quotes from the press of the time, and is also familiar with the magnificent collection in the Dublin Museum, many pieces from which are reproduced. Talking of Irish glass—elsewhere in the book reference is made to the fact that whisky (*sic*) was made in Ireland in the fourteenth century, and Howell in his *Letters*, three centuries later, refers to the *usquebaugh* of Ireland, remarking that “whereas in England they drink it in *aqua vitæ* glasses, in Ireland they drink it in beer glasses.” Those were spacious days, too.

Mr. Lewis has, of course, no mercy for “fakers” ; however, he never hits them on the head with a hammer—no, true sportsman, he plays them, tantalizes them, and just at the right moment strikes, and lays them gasping. Apart from his “feel” for old glass, he has tact of the other description too : we can easily imagine how he would handle a delicate situation in wayside inn or country farmhouse where some choice piece of glass had caught his eye—what feints, what thrusts, what parries, and, we are sure, what triumphs !

M. J. R.